

NEWTON FORSTER;

OR,

THE MERCHANT SERVICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“THE KING’S OWN.”

“HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY.”

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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CHAPTER I.

A green and gilded snake had wreathed itself,
Who, with her head, nimble in threats, approach'd
The opening of his mouth.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE Bombay Castle arrived at Madras without farther adventure. A few hours after she had anchored, all the passengers, receiving kind messages from, or escorted on shore by their relatives or consignees, had landed ; all, with the exception of the three Miss Revels, whose anxiety to land was increased by the departure of the others,

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and the unpleasant situation in which they were placed, by remaining a clog upon Captain Drawlock, who would not quit his ship until he had surrendered up his charge. By inquiry of the dubashes, Captain Drawlock found out that old Colonel Revel was residing at his bungalo, about two miles distant from the fort, and supposing him not to be aware of the arrival of his grand-nieces, he despatched Newton Forster to acquaint him with the circumstance. It was late in the afternoon when Newton arrived at the residence of the colonel, when he perceived immediately that every thing was on the establishment of an old Indian nabob. A double set of palanquin-bearers were stretched under the verandas ; syces were fanning the horses with their chowries ; tailors and various craftsmen were at work in the shade, while a herd of consumers, butlers, and other Indian domestics, were loitering about, or very busy doing nothing.

It will be necessary, before Newton is introduced to the colonel, that the colonel should be

introduced to the reader. He was a man of nearly sixty years of age, forty-five of which, with the exception of occasional furlough, had been passed in the country. Having held several lucrative situations for many years, and, although not parsimonious, being very prudent in money concerns, he had amassed a very large fortune. More than once he had returned to England on leave, and with the full intention of remaining there, if he could be comfortable; but a few months in his native country only made him more anxious to return to India. His habits, his tastes, were all eastern; the close hospitality, the cold winter of England, the loss of consequence, naturally resulting when a man mixes in the crowd of London, all disgusted him, and he invariably returned to India long before his furlough had expired. He was a bachelor from choice. When young, he had been very cruelly treated by the object of his admiration, who deserted him for a few lacks of rupees, which offered themselves with an old man as their appendage. This had raised

his bile against the sex in general, whom he considered as mercenary and treacherous. His parties were numerous and expensive; but women were never to be seen in his house; and his confirmed dislike to them was the occasion of his seldom visiting, except with those who were like himself, in a state of happy singleness. In other points, he was a liberal, worthy man, and a perfect gentleman, but extremely choleric in disposition.

Newton addressed himself to one of the butlers, requesting to be announced. The man led the way to a spacious hall coated and floored with chunam, when Newton perceived the colonel, who presented rather a singular spectacle. "Burra Saib; Saib," said the Indian, and immediately retired.

The colonel was a tall gaunt man, with high cheek-bones, bushy eyebrows, and white hair. He was seated on a solitary chair in the centre of the hall; his dress consisting of a pair of white nankeen trousers and a white shirt, the sleeves

of the latter tucked up to his shoulders, and exposing sinewy arms, covered with hair. By his side lay a basket of mangoes, and before his chair a large tub of water. As Newton entered, he had an opportunity of witnessing the most approved method of eating this exquisite fruit. The colonel had then, one as large as a cassowary's egg, held in both hands, and applied to his mouth, while he held his head over the tub of water, to catch the superabundant juice which flowed over his face, hands, and arms, and covered them with a yellow stain. The contents of the mango were soon exhausted ; the stone and pulp were dropped into the tub of water, and the colonel's hand was extended to the basket for a repetition of his luxurious feast, when Newton was announced. Newton was sorry to interrupt him, and would have made an apology, had he not observed that the colonel, whose back was towards him, continued his pleasing avocation : the fact was, that the colonel was so intent upon his occupation, that he had neither heard the announcement, nor

could he perceive Newton, who thus had an opportunity of witnessing the demolition of at least two dozen more mangoes without the colonel having turned his eyes in that direction, or being aware that he was not alone. But something at length attracted the attention of Newton, and induced him to come forward, and put an end to the colonel's repast. The colonel had just taken another mango out of the basket, when Newton perceived a small snake wind itself over the rim, and curl up one of the feet of the colonel's chair, in such a position, that the very next time that the colonel reached out his hand, he must have come in contact with the reptile. Newton hardly knew how to act; the slightest movement of the old gentleman might be fatal to him; he therefore walked up softly, and was about to strike the animal on the head with his stick, when the colonel, as he leant over the tub, half rose from the chair. In an instant, Newton snatched it from under him, and jerked it with the snake to the corner of the hall. The colonel, whose centre of

gravity had not been thrown sufficiently forward to enable him to keep his feet, fell backward, when Newton and he both rolled on the floor together ; and also both recovered their legs at the same time.

“ You ’ll excuse me, sir,” said Newton.

“ I ’ll be d—d if I do, sir!” interrupted the colonel, in a rage ; “ who the devil are you ?—and how dare you presume to play off such impertinent jokes upon a stranger ?—where did you come from, sir ?—how did you get in, sir ?”

“ Is that a joke, sir ?” replied Newton, calmly pointing to the snake, which was still hissing in its wrath at the corner of the room where the chair lay. Newton then briefly explained the circumstances.

“ Sir, I beg your pardon a thousand times, and am very much your debtor. It is the most venomous snake that we have in the country. I trust you will accept my apology for a moment’s irritation ; and, at the same time, my sincere thanks.” The colonel then summoned the servants, who provided themselves with bamboos,

and soon despatched the object which had occasioned the misunderstanding. The colonel then apologised to Newton, while he repaired to the bath, and in a few minutes returned, having undergone this necessary ablution after a mango feast. His dress was changed, and he offered the appearance of an upright gentlemanlike, hard-featured man, who had apparently gone through a great deal of service without his stamina having been much impaired.

“I beg your pardon, my dear sir, for detaining you. May I request the pleasure of your name, and the occasion of your providential visit?”

“I have a letter for you, sir,” replied Newton, who had been intrusted with the one which Mr. Revel had given to his daughters on their embarkation.

“Oh! a letter of introduction. It is now quite superfluous; you have already introduced yourself.”

“No, sir, it is not a letter of recommendation in my behalf; but to announce the arrival of your

three grand-nieces, daughters of the Honourable Mr. Revel, in the Bombay Castle, the ship to which I belong."

"What?" roared the colonel, "my three grand-nieces! daughters of Mr. Revel!"

"So I have understood from them, sir."

The colonel tore open the letter, in which Mr. Revel very coolly informed him that not having received any answer to his former epistles on the subject, he presumed that they had miscarried, and had therefore been induced, in consequence of the difficulties which he laboured under, to send his daughters out to his kind protection. The colonel, as soon as he had finished the perusal of the letter, tore it into pieces again and again, every renewed action showing an increase of excitement. He then threw the fragments on the floor, stamping upon them in an ecstasy of rage.

"The d—d scoundrel!—the villain!—the rascal!—Do you know, sir, that when I was last in England this fellow swindled me out of a thousand pounds? Yes, sir, a thousand pounds, by

G—d!—promised to pay me in three weeks; and when I was coming back, and asked him for my money, he laughed at me, and ordered his servant not to let me in. And now he has sent out his three daughters to me—pawned them off upon me, laughing I suppose in his sleeve, as he did when he cheated me before. I'll not receive them, by G—d! they may find their way back again how they can;” and the colonel paced the room up and down, throwing his arms about in his fury.

Newton waited some time before he ventured to make any observation; indeed he was so astonished at such an unheard-of proceeding, and so shocked at the unfortunate situation of Isabel, that he hardly knew what to say.

“Am I then to inform the young ladies that you will not receive them?”

“You don't know me, sir.—When did I ever receive a woman into my house? They are all alike, sir.—Plotted with their father, I'll answer for, with the hopes of getting husbands. Tell them, sir, that I'll see them d—d first!—

Swindling scoundrel!—first cheats me out of a thousand pounds, and then tries to cheat me into providing for his family!"

Newton paused a little, to allow the colonel's wrath to subside, and then observed—"I never was so much distressed as to be the bearer of your message. The young ladies are certainly no parties to their father's dishonesty, and are in a situation much to be pitied. In a foreign country, thousands of miles from their friends, without means of subsistence, or of paying their passage home. What is to become of them?"

"I don't care."

"That your indignation is just, Colonel Revel, I admit; but allowing that you will not receive them, how are they to return home? Captain Drawlock, I am sure, would give them a passage; but we proceed to China. Poor girls!" continued Newton, with a sigh. "I should like to make a remark, Colonel Revel, if it were not considered too great a liberty in a stranger."

"You have already taken a liberty, which in

all probability has saved my life. I shall be happy to listen to any remark that you may wish to offer."

"It was, sir, that reprehensible as their father's conduct may be, common humanity, and a regard for your own character, will hardly warrant their being left thus destitute. They at least are your relations, and have neither offended nor deceived you; on the contrary, are, with you, joint victims to their father's deception."

"You appear to take a great interest in these young ladies," observed the colonel, sharply.

"If I had never seen them, sir, their present unfortunate dilemma would be sufficient. Knowing them intimately as I do, I must say that this intelligence will be to one, at least, a death-blow. I would to God that I were able to assist and to protect her!"

"Very handsome then, I presume?" replied the colonel, with a sneer.

"She certainly is, sir; but it was not admiration of her beauty which occasioned the remark.

If you knew her, sir, you would be as sorry to part with her, as you now appear to be to receive her."

The colonel continued to pace the room, but with less violence than before. Newton observed this, and therefore was silent, hoping that reflection would induce him to alter his resolution. In a few minutes, apparently forgetting the presence of Newton, the colonel commenced talking to himself aloud, muttering out the following detached phrases:—"Must take them in, by G—d! Couldn't show my face—no where—d—d scoundrel! Keep them here till next ship—till they are as yellow as gamboge, then send them home—revenge in that."

Thus did the old gentleman mutter loud enough for Newton to overhear. A few minutes more were spent in perambulation, when he threw himself into the chair.

"I think, my young acquaintance, you appear to be interested for these relations of mine; or at least for one of them."

"I certainly am, sir, and so is every one who is acquainted with her."

“ Well, I am glad to hear that there is one good out of the three. I have been put in a passion—no wonder; and I have said more than should be repeated. Were it known that these girls had been sent out to me in this way, the laugh would be raised against me, as it is known that I am not very partial to women; and it would also be of serious injury to them and their prospects. I have determined upon receiving them, for the best of all possible reasons—I can’t help myself. You will therefore add to the obligations of this day, by saying nothing about what has been made known to you.”

“ Most certainly, sir; I will pledge you my honour, if it is requested.”

“ When I say not mention it, I mean to other parties; but to the girls, I must request you to state the facts. I will not have them come here, pawing and fondling, and wheedling me as an old bachelor, with a few lacks of rupees to be coaxed out of. It would make me sick; I detest women and their ways. Now if they are informed of the real state of the case, that they

are here only on sufferance; that I neither wished nor want them; and that I have been imposed upon by their scoundrel of a father, I may keep them at the other end of the bungalow, and not be annoyed with their company; until, upon plea of bad health, or some other excuse, I can pay their passage back again."

" Could you not state these facts yourself, sir?"

" No, I never meddle with women: besides, it is better that they should know it before they come here. If you will promise me what I now request, why I will consent to give them house-room; if not, they may stay where they are. It will be but a few days' laugh at me, or abuse of me, I care little which."

" Well, sir, unpleasant as this intelligence must be, their present suspense is still more so. You will allow me to disclose it in as delicate a manner as possible."

" You may be as refined as you please, provided that you tell the exact truth, which I am convinced that you will, by your countenance."

“ Then I will take my leave, sir,” replied Newton.

“ Fare you well, my dear sir; recollect that my house is your home; and although not fond of the society of women, I shall be delighted with yours. The young ladies may be brought on shore to the hotel, and I will send a carriage for them. Good-by.—What is your name?”

“ Forster, sir.”

“ Good-by then, Mr. Forster, for the present;” and the colonel quitted the room.

CHAPTER II.

Then there were sighs, the deeper for suppression,
And stolen glances, sweeter for the theft,
And burning blushes, though for no transgression,
Tremblings when met, and restlessness when left.
All these are little preludes to possession,
Of which young passion cannot be bereft,
And merely tend to show how greatly love is
Embarrassed, at first starting, with a novice.

BYRON.

IT was in no very happy frame of mind that Newton quitted the colonel's house to execute his mission to the Miss Revels. That the two eldest, provided they were admitted, would not much take to heart, either the conduct of their father, or the coolness of their relation, he was pretty well assured; but he was too well ac-

quainted with Isabel's character, not to know that she would deeply feel the humiliating situation in which she was placed; and that it would prey upon her generous and sensitive mind. As however there was no remedy, he almost congratulated himself that, as the colonel's message was to be delivered, the commission had been placed in his trust.

Captain Drawlock, tired of waiting, had escorted the young ladies on shore to the hotel, anxiously expecting the arrival of Newton, who was conducted there by a messenger despatched to intercept him.

"Well, Mr. Forster, is it all right?" said Captain Drawlock, on his appearance.

"The colonel's carriage will be here for the ladies in less than half an hour," replied Newton, evasively.

"Then, Miss Revels, as I am extremely busy, I shall wish you good morning, and will have the pleasure of paying my respects before I sail. Allow me to offer you my best thanks for your

company during our voyage, and to assure you how much your presence has contributed to enliven it. Forster, you will of course remain with the Miss Revels, and see them safe in the carriage ;" and Captain Drawlock, who appeared to consider his responsibility over with the voyage, shook hands with them and quitted the hotel.

" Mr. Forster," said Isabel, as soon as Captain Drawlock was out of hearing, " I am sure by your countenance that there has been something unpleasant. Is it not so ?"

" I am sorry to answer in the affirmative, and more sorry to be forced to impart the cause." Newton then entered into a detail of what had passed at the colonel's house. Isabel listened to it with attention, her sisters with impatience. Miss Charlotte, with an air of consternation, inquired whether the colonel had refused to receive them : on being informed to the contrary, she appeared to be satisfied. Laura simpered, and observed, " How very odd of papa !" and then seemed to think no more about it. Isabel made

no observation; she remained on her chair, apparently in deep and painful thought.

A few minutes after the communication the colonel's carriage made its appearance, and Newton proposed that they should quit the hotel. Charlotte and Laura were all ready and impatient, but Isabel remained seated by the table.

“ Come, Isabel,” cried Charlotte.

“ I cannot go, my dear Charlotte,” replied Isabel ; “ but do not let me prevent you or Laura from deciding for yourselves.”

“ Not go!” cried the two sisters at once. Isabel was firm ; and Newton, who did not think himself authorised to interfere, was a silent witness to the continued persuasions and expostulations of the two elder, and the refusal of the younger sister. Nearly half an hour thus passed away, when Charlotte and Laura decided that they would go, and send back the carriage for Isabel, who by that time would have come to her senses. The heartless, unthinking girls tripped gaily down to the carriage and drove off. Newton, who had

escorted them, retraced his steps, with a beating heart, to the room where he had left Isabel.

She was in tears.

“Do I intrude, Miss Revel?” said Newton, who could not repress his emotion at the sight.

“Oh, no! I expected and wished that you would return, Mr. Forster. Do you think that you could find Captain Drawlock? I should feel much obliged if you would take that trouble for me.”

“I will immediately go in search of him, if you wish it. Believe me, Miss Revel, I feel most sincerely for your situation; and, if it were not considered an impertinent question, I should ask you, what may be your present intentions?”

“Acquainted as you are with all the circumstances, Mr. Forster, the question is not impertinent, but kind. God knows that I require an adviser. I would, if possible, conceal the facts from Captain Drawlock. It is not for a daughter to publish a father’s errors; but you know all,

and I can therefore have no scruple in consulting with you : I do not see why I should. My resolution is, at best, a hasty one ; but it is, never to enter the house of my relation under such humiliating circumstances—that is decided : but how to act, or what to do, is where I require advice. I am in a cruel situation. What a helpless creature is a woman ! Were I a man, I could have worked my passage home, or have honestly obtained my bread in this place ; but a woman—a young and unprotected woman—in a distant clime, and without a friend—”

“ Do not say that you are without a friend ; one who has at least the will, if not the power to serve you,” replied Newton.

“ No—not without a friend ; but what avails a friend whose assistance I could not accept ? It is to Captain Drawlock therefore that I must apply, and, painful as it may be, throw myself upon his generosity ; for that reason I wished to see him. He may advise some means by which I may obtain a passage home. I will return in any capa-

city, as a nurse to children, as an attendant—any thing that is creditable. I would watch over the couch of fever, pestilence, and plague, for months, rather than appear to be a party to my father's duplicity. Oh ! Mr. Forster, what must you think of the daughters, after what you have heard of the parent's conduct ?"—and Isabel burst into tears.

Newton could contain himself no longer. " My dear Miss Revel, let me persuade you to compose yourself," said he, taking her hand, which was not withdrawn ; " if you feel on this occasion, so do I most deeply ;—most deeply, because I can only lament, and dare not offer to assist you. The means of returning to your own country I can easily procure from Captain Drawlock ; but would you accept it from me ? I know—I cannot expect that you would ; and that, under such circumstances, it would be insulting in me to offer it. Think, then, what pain I must feel to witness your distress, and yet dare not offer to assist one for whom—oh ! my God—" ended Newton, checking his feelings.

“ I feel the kindness and the delicacy of your conduct, Mr. Forster ; and I will candidly acknowledge, that, could I accept it, there is no one to whom I would more cheerfully be under an obligation ; but the world will not permit it.”

“ What shall I do, Miss Revel ?—shall I go for Captain Drawlock ?”

“ Stay a little while, I wish to reflect. What would you advise ? as a friend, tell me candidly, Mr. Forster.”

“ I am indeed proud that you allow me that title. It is all that I ever dare hope for ;—but Isabel (I beg your pardon, Miss Revel, I should have said)—”

“ Nay, nay, I am not displeased. Why not Isabel ? We have known one another long enough, and, deserted as I feel, a kind word now—”

Isabel covered her face with her hand. Newton, who was standing by her, was overcome by the intensity of his feelings ; gradually they approached nearer, until by, I suppose, the same principle which holds the universe

together, the attraction of cohesion, Newton's arm encircled the waist of Isabel, and she sobbed upon his shoulder. It was with difficulty that Newton refrained from pouring out his soul, and expressing the ardent love which he had so long felt for her ; but it was taking advantage of her situation. He had nothing to offer but himself and beggary. He did refrain. The words were not spoken ; yet Isabel divined his thoughts, appreciated his forbearance, and loved him more for his resolution.

“ Isabel,” said Newton, at length, with a sigh, “ I never valued or wished for wealth till now. Till this hour I never felt the misery of being poor.”

“ I believe you, Mr. Forster ; and I am grateful, as I know that it is for my sake that you feel it ; but,” continued she, recovering herself, “ crying will do no good. I asked you for your advice, and you have only given me your arm.”

“ I am afraid it is all I shall ever have to offer,” replied Newton. “ But, Isabel, allow me to ask

you one question:—are you resolved never to enter your relation's house?"

" Not on the humiliating terms which he has proposed. Let the colonel come here for me and take me home with him, and then I will remain there until I can return to England ; if not, I will submit to any privation, to any honest humiliation, rather than enter under his roof. But indeed, Mr. Forster, it is necessary that Captain Drawlock should be summoned. We are here alone : it is not correct ; you must feel that it is not."

" I do feel that it is not ; but, Isabel, I was this morning of some trifling service to the colonel, and may have some little weight with him. Will you allow me to return to him and try what I can do ? It will not be dark for these two hours, and I will soon be back."

Isabel assented. Newton hastened to the colonel, who had already been much surprised when he had been informed by his domestics (for he had not seen them) that only two ladies had

arrived. The old gentleman was now cool. The explanation and strong persuasions of Newton, coupled with the spirited behaviour of Isabel, whose determination was made known to him, and which was so different from the general estimate he had formed of the sex, at last prevailed. The colonel ordered his carriage, and, in company with Newton, drove to the hotel, made a sort of apology—a wonderful effort on his part, and requested his grand-niece to accept of his hospitality. In a few minutes Isabel and the colonel were out of sight, and Newton was left to his own reflections.

A few days afterwards Newton accepted the colonel's invitation to dine, when he found that affairs were going on better than he expected. The old gentleman had been severely quizzed by those who were intimate with him, at the addition to his establishment, and had winced not a little under the lash ; but, on the whole, he appeared more reconciled than would have been expected.

Newton, however, observed that, when speaking of the three sisters, he invariably designated them as "my grand-niece and the two other young women."

CHAPTER III.

Rich in the gems of India's gaudy zone,
And plunder piled from kingdoms not their own,
Degenerate trade ! thy minions could despise
Thy heart-born anguish of a thousand cries ;
Could lock, with impious hands, their teeming store,
While famish'd nations died along the shore;
Could mock the groans of fellow men, and bear
The curse of kingdoms, peopled with despair;
Could stamp disgrace on man's polluted name,
And barter with their gold eternal shame.

CAMPBELL.

GOLD !—gold ! for thee, what will man not attempt ?—for thee, to what degradation will he not submit ?—for thee, what will he not risk in this world, or prospectively in the next ?—Industry is rewarded by thee; enterprise is supported by thee; crime is cherished, and heaven itself is

bartered for thee, thou powerful auxiliary of the devil ! One tempter was sufficient for the fall of man ; but thou wert added, that he ne'er might rise again.

Survey the empire of India; calculate the millions of acres, the billions with which it is peopled, and then pause while you ask yourself the question—how is it that a company of merchants claim it as their own ? By what means did it come into their possession ?

Honestly, they will reply. Honestly ! you went there as suppliants; you were received with kindness and hospitality, and your request was granted, by which you obtained a footing on the soil. Now you are lords of countless acres, masters of millions, who live or perish as you will ; receivers of enormous tribute.—Why, how is this ?

Honestly, again you say; by treaty, by surrender, by taking from those who would have destroyed us the means of doing injury. Honestly ! say it again, that Heaven may register, and hell

may chuckle at your barefaced, impudent assertion.

No! by every breach of faith which could disgrace an infidel ; by every act of cruelty which could disgrace our nature ; by extortion, by rapine, by injustice, by mockery of all laws or human or divine. The thirst for gold, and a golden country, led you on ; and in these scorching regions you have raised the devil on his throne, and worshipped him in his proud pre-eminence as Mammon.

Let us think. Is not the thirst for gold a temptation to which our natures are doomed to be subjected—part of the ordeal which we have to pass ? or why is it that there never is sufficient ?

It appears to be ordained by Providence that this metal, obtained from the earth to feed the avarice of man, should again return to it. If all the precious ore which for a series of ages has been raised from the dark mine were now in tangible existence, how trifling would be its value ! how inadequate as a medium of exchange for the

other productions of nature, or of art! If all the diamonds and other precious stones which have been collected from the decomposed rocks, (for hard as they once were, like all sublunary matter, they too yield to Time,) why, if all were remaining on the earth, the frolic gambols of the May-day sweep would shake about those gems, which now are to be found in profusion only where rank and beauty pay homage to the thrones of kings. Arts and manufactures consume a large proportion of the treasures of the mine, and as the objects fall into decay, so does the metal return to the earth again. But it is in eastern climes, where it is collected, that it soonest disappears. Where the despot reigns, and the knowledge of an individual's wealth is sufficient warranty to seal his doom, it is to the care of the silent earth alone that the possessor will commit his treasures; he trusts not to relation or to friend, for gold is too powerful for human ties. It is but on his death-bed that he imparts the secret of his deposit to those he leaves behind him; often called away

before he has time to make it known, reserving the fond secret till too late ; still clinging to life, and all that makes life dear to him. Often does the communication, made from the couch of death, in half-articulated words, prove so imperfect, that the knowledge of its existence is of no avail unto his intended heirs ; and thus it is, that millions return again to the earth from which they have been gathered with such toil. What avarice has dug up, avarice buries again ; perhaps in future ages to be regained by labour, when, from the chemical powers of eternal and mysterious Nature, they have again been filtered through the indurated earth, and reassumed the form and the appearance of the metal which has lain in darkness since the creation of the world.

Is not this part of the grand principle of the universe ? the eternal cycle of reproduction and decay, pervading all and every thing, blindly contributed to by the folly and the wickedness of man ? " So far shalt thou go, but no farther," was the fiat ; and, arrived at the prescribed limit, we

must commence again. At this moment intellect has seized upon the seven-league boots of the fable, which fitted every body who drew them on, and strides over the universe. How soon, as on the decay of the Roman empire, may all the piles of learning which human endeavours would rear as a tower of Babel to scale the heavens, disappear, leaving but fragments to future generations, as proofs of pre-existent knowledge! Whether we refer to nature or to art, to knowledge or to power, to accumulation or destruction, bounds have been prescribed which man can never pass, guarded as they are by the same unerring and unseen Power, which threw the planets from his hand, to roll in their appointed orbits. All appears confused below, but all is clear in heaven.

I have somewhere heard it said, that where heaven may be, those who reach it will behold the mechanism of the universe in its perfection. Those stars, now studding the firmament in such apparent confusion, will there appear in all their regularity, as worlds revolving in their several

orbits, round suns that gladden them with light and heat, all in harmony, all in beauty, rejoicing as they roll their destined course in obedience to the Almighty fiat ; one vast, stupendous, and, to the limits of our present senses, incomprehensible mechanism, perfect in all its parts, most wonderful in the whole. Nor do I doubt it ; it is but reasonable to suppose it. He that hath made this world and all upon it can have no limits to His power.

I wonder whether I shall ever see it.

I said just now, let us think. I had better have said, let us not think ; for thought is painful, even dangerous when carried to excess. Happy is he who thinks but little, whose ideas are so confined as not to cause the intellectual fever, wearing out the mind and body, and often threatening both with dissolution. There is a happy medium of intellect, sufficient to convince us that all is good—sufficient to enable us to comprehend that which is revealed, without a vain endeavour to pry into the hidden ; to understand the one, and

lend our faith unto the other; but when the mind would soar unto the heaven not opened to it, or dive into sealed and dark futurity, how does it return from its several expeditions? confused, alarmed, unhappy; willing to rest, yet restless; willing to believe, yet doubting; willing to end its futile travels, yet setting forth anew. Yet, how is a superior understanding envied! how coveted by all! a gift which always leads to danger, and often to perdition.

Thank Heaven! I have not been intrusted with one of those thorough-bred, snorting, champing, foaming sort of intellects, which run away with Common Sense, who is jerked from his saddle at the beginning of its wild career. Mine is a good steady, useful hack, who trots along the high-road of life, keeping on his own side, and only stumbling a little now and then, when I happen to be careless,—ambitious only to arrive safely at the end of his journey, not to pass by others.

Why am I no longer ambitious? once I was, but 'twas when I was young and foolish. Then

methought “ It were an easy leap to pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon ;” but now I am old and fat, and there is something in fat which chokes or destroys ambition. It would appear that it is requisite for the body to be active and springing as the mind ; and if it is not, it weighs the latter down to its own gravity. Who ever heard of a fat man being ambitious ? Cæsar was a spare man ; Bonaparte was thin, as long as he climbed the ladder ; Nelson was a shadow. The Duke of Wellington has not sufficient fat in his composition to grease his own Wellington-boots. In short, I think my hypothesis to be fairly borne out, that fat and ambition are incompatible.

It is very melancholy to be forced to acknowledge this, for I am convinced that it may be of serious injury to my works. An author with a genteel figure will always be more read than one who is corpulent. All his etherealness departs. Some young ladies may have fancied me an elegant young man, like Lytton Bulwer, full of fun

and humour, concealing all my profound knowledge under the mask of levity, and have therefore read my books with as much delight as has been afforded by Pelham. But the truth must be told. I am a grave, heavy man, with my finger continually laid along my temple, seldom speaking unless spoken to—and when ladies talk I never open my mouth; the consequence is, that sometimes, when there is a succession of company, I do not speak for a week. Moreover, I am married, with five small children; and now all I look forward to, and all I covet, is to live in peace and die in my bed.

I wonder why I did not commence authorship before! How true it is that a man never knows what he can do until he tries! The fact is, I never thought that I could make a novel; and I was thirty years old before I stumbled on the fact. What a pity!

Writing a book reminds me very much of making a passage across the Atlantic. At one moment, when the ideas flow, you have the wind

aft, and away you scud, with a flowing sheet, and a rapidity which delights you: at other times, when your spirit flags, and you gnaw your pen, (I have lately used iron pens, for I 'm a devil of a crib-biter,) it is like unto a foul wind, tack and tack, requiring a long time to get on a short distance. But still you do go, although but slowly; and in both cases we must take the foul wind with the fair. If a ship were to furl her sails until the wind again was favourable, her voyage would be protracted to an indefinite time; and, if an author were to wait until he again felt in a humour, it would take a life to write a novel.

Whenever the wind is foul, which it now most certainly is, for I am writing any thing but "Newton Forster," and which will account for this rambling, stupid chapter, made up of odds and ends, strung together like what we call "skewer pieces" on board of a man-of-war; when the wind is foul, as I said before, I have, however, a way of going a-head, by getting up the

steam which I am now about to resort to—and the fuel is brandy. All on this side of the world are asleep, except gamblers, house-breakers, the new police, and authors. My wife is in the arms of Morpheus—an allegorical *crim. con.*, which we husbands are obliged to wink at; and I am making love to the brandy bottle, that I may stimulate my ideas, as unwilling to be roused from their dark cells of the brain as the spirit summoned by Lochiel, who implored at each response, “Leave me, oh! leave me to repose.”

‘ Now I ’ll invoke them, conjure them up, like little imps, to do my bidding.

By this glass, which now I drain,
By this spirit, which shall cheer you,
As its fumes mount to my brain,
From thy torpid slumbers rear you.

By this head, so tired with thinking,
By this hand, no longer trembling,
By these lips, so fond of drinking,
Let me feel that you ’re assembling.

By the bottle placed before me,
(Food for you, ere morrow's sun,)
By this second glass, I pour me,
Come, you *little beggars*, come.

CHAPTER IV.

British sailors have a knack,
Haul away, yo ho, boys,
Of hauling down a Frenchman's jack
'Gainst any odds, you know, boys.

OLD SONG.

THERE was, I flatter myself, some little skill in the introduction of the foregoing chapter, which has played the part of chorus during the time that the Bombay Castle has proceeded on to Canton, has taken in her cargo, and is on her passage home, in company with fifteen other East Indiamen and several country ships, all laden with the riches of the East, and hastening to pour their treasures into the lap of their country.

Millions were floating on the waters, intrusted to the skill of merchant-seamen to convey them home in safety, and to their courage to defend them from the enemy, which had long been lying in wait to intercept them. By a very unusual chance or oversight, there had been no men-of-war despatched to protect a property of such enormous value.

The Indian fleet had just entered the Straits of Malacca, and were sailing in open order, with a fresh breeze and smooth water. The hammocks had been stowed, the decks washed, and the awnings spread. Shoals of albacore were darting across the bows of the different ships; and the seamen, perched upon the cat-heads and sprit-sail-yard, had succeeded in piercing with their harpoons many, which were immediately cut up, and in the frying-pans for breakfast. But very soon they had "other fish to fry;" for one of the Indiamen, the Royal George, made the signal that there were four strange sail in the S.W.

"A gun from the commodore, sir," reported

Newton, who was officer of the watch. "The flags are up—they are not our pennants."

It was an order to four ships of the fleet to run down and examine the strange vessels.

Half an hour elapsed, during which time the glasses were at every mast-head. Captain Draw-lock himself, although not much given to climbing, having probably had enough of it during his long career in the service, was to be seen in the main-top. Doubts, suspicions, declarations, surmises, and positive assertions were bandied about, until they were all dispelled by the reconnoitring ships telegraphing, "a French squadron, consisting of one line-of-battle ship, three frigates, and a brig." It was in fact the well-known squadron of Admiral Linois, who had scoured the Indian seas, ranging it up and down with the velocity as well as the appetite of a shark. His force consisted of the Marengo, of eighty-guns; the famed Belle Poule, a forty-gun frigate, which outstripped the wind; the Sémillante, of thirty-six guns; the Berceau ship corvette of twenty-two, and a brig

of sixteen. They had sailed from Batavia on purpose to intercept the China fleet, having received intelligence that it was unprotected, and anticipating an easy conquest, if not an immediate surrender to their overpowering force.

“The recall is up on board of the commodore,” said Mathews, the first-mate, to Captain Drawlock.

“Very well, keep a good-look out; he intends to fight, I’ll answer for it. We must not surrender up millions to these French scoundrels without a tussle.”

“I should hope not,” replied Mathews; “but that big fellow will make a general average among our tea cannisters, I expect, when we do come to the scratch. There go the flags, sir,” continued Mathews, repeating the number to Captain Drawlock, who had the signal-book in his hand.

“Form line of battle in close order, and prepare for action,” read Captain Drawlock from the signal-book.

A cheer resounded through the fleet when the signal was made known. The ships were already near enough to each other to hear the shouting, and the confidence of others added to their own.

“ If we only had *all* English seamen on board, instead of these Lascars and Chinamen, who look so blank,” observed Newton to Mathews, “ I think we would show them some play.”

“ Yes,” growled Mathews, “ John Company will some day find out the truth of the old proverb, “ Penny wise and pound foolish !”

The French squadron, which had continued on the wind to leeward until they could fetch the India fleet, now tacked and laid up directly for them. In the mean time the English vessels were preparing for action : the clearing of their lumbered decks was the occasion of many a coop of fowls or pig of the true China breed, exchanging their destiny for a watery grave. Fortunately, there were no passengers. Homeward-bound China ships are not incumbered in that way, unless to

astonish the metropolis with such monstrosities as the mermaid, or as the Siamese twins, coupled by nature like two hounds (separated lately indeed by Lytton Bulwer, who has satisfactorily proved that “unity between brethren,” so generally esteemed a blessing, on the contrary, is a bore). In a short time all was ready, and the Indian fleet continued their course under easy sail, neither courting nor avoiding the conflict.

At night-fall the French squadron hauled to the wind: the conduct of the China fleet rendered them cautious, and the French admiral considered it advisable to ascertain by broad daylight whether a portion of the English ships were not men-of-war; their cool and determined behaviour certainly warranting the suspicion. It was now to be decided whether the Indiamen should take advantage of the darkness of the night to escape, or wait the result of the ensuing day. The force opposed to them was formidable and concentrated; their own on the contrary was weak from division, each ship not having more than sixty English seamen

on board ; the country ships none at all, the few belonging to them having volunteered on board of the Indiamen. In his decision Commodore Dance proved his judgment as well as his courage. In an attempt to escape, the fleet would separate ; and, from the well-known superior sailing of the French squadron, most of them would be overtaken, and, being attacked single-handed, fall an easy prey to the enemy.

In this opinion the captains of the Indiamen, who had communicated during the night, were unanimous, and equally so in the resolution founded upon it, "to keep together and fight to the last." The India fleet lay to for the night, keeping their lights up and the men at their quarters ; most of the English seamen sound asleep, the Lascars and Chinese sitting up in groups, expressing in their own tongues their fear of the approaching combat, in which, whether risked for national honour or individual property, they could have no interest.

The morning broke, and discovered the French

squadron about three miles to windward. Admiral Linois had calculated, that if the fleet consisted only of merchant vessels, they would have profited by the darkness to have attempted to escape, and he had worked to windward during the night, that he might be all ready to pounce down upon his quarry. But when he perceived that the English ships did not attempt to increase their distance, he was sadly puzzled.

The French tricolour hardly had time to blow clear from their taffrails, when the English unions waved aloft in defiance ; and that Admiral Linois might be more perplexed by the arrangements of the night, three of the most warlike-appearing Indiamen displayed the red ensign, while the remainder of the ships hoisted up the blue. This *ruse* led the French admiral to suppose that these three vessels were men-of-war, composing the escort of the fleet.

At nine o'clock the commodore made the signal to fill ; and the French squadron not bearing down, the India fleet continued its course under easy

sail. The French admiral then edged away with his squadron, with the intention of cutting off the country ships which had been stationed to leeward; but which, since the British fleet had hauled their wind, had been left in the rear. It was now requisite for the British commander to act decidedly and firmly. Captain Timmins, an officer for courage and conduct not surpassed by any in our naval service, who commanded the Royal George, edged to within hail of the commodore, and recommended that the order should be given to tack in succession, bear down in a line a-head, and engage the enemy. This spirited advice was acted upon; the Royal George leading into action, followed by the other ships in such close order that their flying jib-booms were often pointed over the taffrails of their predecessors.

In a quarter of an hour was to be witnessed the unusual spectacle of a fleet of merchant ships exchanging broadsides with the best equipped and highest disciplined squadron that ever sailed from

France. In less than an hour was presented the more unusual sight of this squadron flying from the merchant ships, and the signal for a general chase answered with enthusiastic cheers.

That Admiral Linois might have supposed, previous to the engagement, that some of the British ships were men-of-war, is probable ; but that he knew otherwise after they had commenced action, must also have been the case. The fact was, he was frightened at their determined courage and their decided conduct ; and he fled, not from the guns, but from the *men*.

I do not know on record any greater instance of heroism on the part of British seamen ; and I am delighted that Newton Forster was in the conflict, or of course I could not have introduced it in this work.

And now, those who read for amusement may, if they please, skip over to the next chapter. There are points connected with the India service which I intend to comment upon ; and as all the wisdom of the age is confined to novels, and nobody reads pamphlets, I introduce them here.

When one man is empowered to hold in check, and to insist upon the obedience of a large proportion of his fellows, it can only be by "opinion" that his authority can be supported.

By "opinion," I mean the knowledge that he is so empowered by the laws of the country to which they all belong, and by which laws they will be punished, if they act in opposition to his authority. The fiat of the individual commanding is in this case the fiat of the nation at large; to contend with this fiat is not contending with the individual, but with the nation, to whose laws they must submit, or return to their country no more. A commander of a vessel, therefore, armed with martial law, is in fact representing and executing, not his own will, but that of the nation who have made the law; for he is amenable, as well as his inferiors, if he acts contrary to, or misuses it.

In the merchant service martial law is not permitted; the by-laws relative to shipping, and the common law of the country, are supposed to be sufficient and certainly the present system is

more advisable than to vest such excessive power in the hands of men, who, generally speaking, neither require nor are fit to be intrusted with it. Where, as in the greater number of merchant vessels, the master and his subordinate officers compose one-third, if not one-half of the complement on board, nothing but the most flagrant conduct is likely to produce insubordination.

But in the East India service the case is different. The vessels themselves are of dimensions equal if not superior to our largest class of frigates, and they carry from thirty to forty guns; the property embarked in them is also of such an extent, that the loss almost becomes national: their commanders are men of superior attainments, as gentlemen and as officers; finally, the complement of seamen under their command is larger than on board of many of the king's ships.

The above considerations will at once establish that those by-laws which afford protection to the well-governing of the merchant service in general, are not sufficient to maintain the necessary

discipline on board of the East India ships. The greater the disproportion between the unit who commands and the numbers who obey, the greater the chance of mutiny. Sedition is the progeny of assembly. Even where grievances may be real, if there is no contact and no discussion, there will be no insubordination ; but imaginary grievances, canvassed and discussed in assembly, swell into disaffection and mutiny. When therefore numbers are collected together, as in the vessels of the East India service, martial law becomes indispensable ; and the proof of it is, that the commanders of these vessels have been forced to exercise it upon their own responsibility. A letter of marque should be granted to all vessels carrying a certain number of men, empowering the commanders, under certain sureties and penalties, to exercise this power. It would be a boon to the East India ships, and ultimately a benefit to the navy.

To proceed. The merchant ships of the Company are men-of-war ; the men-of-war of the

Company are—what shall I call them? By their right names—they are all *Bombay Marine*: but let me at once assert, in applying their own name to them as a reproach, that the officers commanding them are not included in the stigma. I have served with them, and have pleasure in stating that, taking the average, the vessels are as well officered as those in our own service; but let us describe the vessels and their crews. Most of the vessels are smaller in scantling than the run-down (and constantly *going down*) ten-gun brigs in our service, built for a light draft of water, (as they were originally intended to act against the pirates, which occasionally infest the Indian seas,) and unfit to contend with any thing like a heavy sea. Many of them are pierced for, and actually carry fourteen to sixteen guns; but, as effective fighting vessels, ought not to have been pierced for more than eight. I have no hesitation in asserting that an English cutter is a match for any of them, and a French privateer has, before now, proved that she was superior. The crews are

composed of a small proportion of English seamen, a small proportion of Portuguese sea-cun-
nies, a proportion of Lascars, and a proportion of Hindoo Bombay marines. It requires two or
three languages to carry on the duty; customs,
religions, provisions, all different, and all living
and messing separate. How is it possible that
any officer can discipline a ship's company of this
incongruous description, so as to make them
“pull together?” In short, the vessels and the
crews are equally contemptible, and the officers
in cases of difficulty must be sacrificed to the
pride and meanness of the Company. My reason
for taking notice of the “Bombay Marine”
arises from an order lately promulgated, in which
the officers of this service were to take rank and
precedence with those of the navy. Now, as far
as the officers themselves are concerned, so far
from having any objection to it, I wish, for their
own merits and the good-will that I bear them,
that they were incorporated into our navy-list;
but as long as they command vessels of the above

description, in the event of a war, I will put a case, to prove the absurdity and danger which may result. There is not one vessel at this present time in their service which would not be sunk by one well-directed broadside from a large frigate ; yet as many of their officers are of long standing, it is very probable that a squadron of English frigates may fall in with one of these vessels, the captain of which would be authorised by his seniority to take the command of the whole of them. We will suppose that this squadron falls in with the enemy, of equal or superior force ; can the officer in command lead on to the attack ? If so, he will be sent down by the first broadside. If he does not, from whom are the orders to proceed during the action ? The consequences would be as injurious as the arrangement is ridiculous.

The charter of the East India Company will soon expire ; and if it is to be renewed, the country ought to have some indemnification for the three millions which this colony or conquest (which you please)

annually draws from it. Now there is one point which deserves consideration; the constitutional protection of all property is by the nation, and as a naval force is required in India, that force should be supplied by the armaments of the nation, at the expense of the Company. I have already proved that the Bombay Marine is a useless and incompetent service: let it be abolished altogether, and men-of-war be sent out to supply their place. It is most important that our navy should be employed in time of peace, and our officers gain that practical knowledge, without which the theoretical is useless. Was this insisted upon, a considerable force would be actively employed, at no expense to the country, and many officers become valuable, who now are remaining inactive, and forgetting what previous knowledge they may have acquired of their nautical duties.

At the same time, every East India ship should be compelled to take on board her whole complement of English seamen, and not be half manned by Lascars and Chinamen.

But I presume I must be careful how I attempt to legislate for that country, or I shall have two tame elephants sent after me by the man *what* puts his hair in papers !

CHAPTER V.

What singular emotions fill
Their bosoms, who have been induced to roam,
With flattering doubts, if all be well or ill,
With love for many, and with fears for some!

BYRON.

THE China fleet arrived without encountering any farther danger; the commodore and commanders of the several ships composing the fleet received that praise from their countrymen to which their conduct had so fully entitled them. As soon as the Bombay Castle had entered the basin of the East India docks Newton requested, and easily obtained, permission to leave the ship. He immediately directed his steps to Greenwich, that he might ascertain if his father was in exist-

ence; for he had received no letters since his departure, although he had taken several opportunities to write. It is true that he had not expected any; he knew that his father was too absent ever to think about writing to him, and his uncle much too busy to throw away any portion of his time in unnecessary correspondence.

When we approach the dwelling containing, or supposed to contain, an object of solicitude, of whose existence we are uncertain, what a thrill of anxiety pervades the frame! How quickened is the throbbing of the heart! how checked the respiration! Thus it was with Newton Forster, as he raised his hand to the latch of the door. He opened it, and the first object which delighted his eyes was his father seated upon a high stool, smoking his pipe, in the company of two veterans of the hospital, who had brought their old bones to an anchor upon a large trunk. They were in earnest conversation, and did not perceive the company of Newton, who waited a little while, holding the door ajar, as he contemplated the group.

One of the pensioners was speaking, and continued :—" May be, or may not be, Mr. Forster, that 's *dubersome* ; but if so be as how he is alive, why, you 'll see him soon, that 's sartain—take my word for it. A good son, as you say he was, as soon as he can get over the side of the ship, always bears up for his parent's house. With the help of your barnacles, I worked my way clean through the whole yarn, and I seed the report of killed and wounded ; and I 'll take my affidavy that there warn't an officer in the fleet as lost the number of his mess in that action, and a most clipping affair it was ; only think of mounseer turning tail to marchant vessels ! Damn my old buttons ! what will our jolly fellows do next ?"

" Next, Bill ! why, there be nothing to do, less they shave off the beard of the grand Turk to make a swab for the cabin of the king's yatch, and sarve out his seven hundred wives amongst the fleet. I say, I wonder how he keeps so many of them craft in good order ?"

“I knows,” replied the other, “for I axed the very question when I was up the Dardanelles. There be a black fellow, a *unique* they calls him, with a large sword and a bag of saw-dust, as always stands sentry at the door, and if so be a woman kicks up a bobbery, why plump her head goes into the bag.”

“Well, that’s one way to make a good woman on her; but, as I was a saying, Mr. Forster, you mus’nt be down in the mouth; a seaman as knows his duty never cares for leave till all the work be done. I’d bet a yard of pigtail that Mr. Newton—”

“Is here, my good fellow!” interrupted Newton. “My dear father!”

Nicholas sprung off his seat, and embraced his son.

“My dear, dear boy! why did you not come to me before? I was afraid that you had been killed. Well, I’m glad to see you, Newton. How did you like the West Indies?”

“The East Hinges, you mean, Mr. Forster.—

Newton," continued the old pensioner, wiping both sides of his hand upon his blue breeches, and then extending it—" Tip us your daddle, my lad; I like to touch the flipper of one who has helped to shame the enemy; and it will be no disgrace for you to grapple with an old seaman, who did his duty as long as he had a pin to stand upon."

" With pleasure, my friend," replied Newton, taking the old man's hand, while the other veteran seized the one unoccupied, and surveying Newton from top to toe, observed—" If your ship be manned with all such lads as you,—why, she be damned well manned, that's all."

Newton laughed, and turned to his father.

" Well, father, how are you? Have you been quite well? And how do you like your berth here?"

" Why, Newton, I get on much better than I did at Bristol."

" It be Liverpool he mean, Mr. Newton; but your good father be a little damaged in his upper

works; his memory-box be like a sieve.—Come, Bill, we be two too many. When father and son meet after an India voyage, there be much to say as wants no listeners.—Good-by, Mr. Forster; may you never want a son, and may he never want a ship!"

Newton smiled his thanks to the considerate old pensioners as they stumped out of the door, and left him alone with his father. The communications of Nicholas were as concise as usual. He liked his situation, liked his company, had as much work as he wished for, and had enjoyed good health. When Newton entered upon pecuniary matters, which he was the sooner induced to do by observing that his father's coat and small-clothes were in a most ruinous condition, he discovered, that although the old gentleman had provided himself with money from the bankers, during the first year, to purchase a new suit of clothes, latterly he not only had quite forgotten that there were funds at his disposal, but even that he had procured

the clothes, which had remained in the chest from the day they had been sent home without having been tried on.

“Dear me! now I recollect, so I did, and I put them up stairs, somewhere. I was busy at the time with my improvement on the duplex.”

“Have you seen much of my uncle, sir?” inquired Newton.

“Your uncle! dear me, no!—I don’t know where he lives, so I waited until you came back. We’ll go to-morrow, Newton, or he may think me unkind. I’ll see if his watch goes well. I recollect he said it did; but, Newton, tell me all about your voyage, and the action with the French ships.”

Newton entered into a detail, during which he perceived by his father’s questions that his memory had become more impaired, and that he was more absent than ever. He arranged to call upon his uncle the ensuing day, and then it was his intention, without communicating it to his father, to make every inquiry, and advertise to

ascertain the fate of his mother. This was a duty which he had long wished to repeat; but his necessities and want of time had hitherto precluded the renewal of the task.

Early the next morning Newton and his father went up to London by the Greenwich coach, and a walk of a few minutes after they were put down brought them to the chambers of Mr. John Forster.

“How do you do, Mr. Scratton? Is my uncle at home?” inquired Newton.

Mr. Scratton immediately recognised him, and very graciously replied, that his uncle was at home, and would be very glad to see him, having talked very often of him lately.

Newton and his father were ushered into the parlour, where he found his uncle precisely in the same position as when he last saw him;—it would almost have appeared that he had not quitted his seat during Newton’s tedious voyage.

“Nephew,” said Mr. John Forster, without rising from his chair, “I am very glad to see

you.—Brother Nicholas, I am very glad to see you, too.—Chairs, Scratton,” continued the old lawyer, taking his watch off the table and placing it in his fob. “ Well, nephew, I am very glad to hear such good accounts of you. I saw Mr. Bosanquet yesterday, and he told me that you had, for your good conduct, been promoted to the rank of second-mate.”

“ It is more than I was aware of,” replied Newton, much pleased with the information. “ I am much obliged to you for the intelligence, as I am for your many other acts of kindness.”

“ Well, so you ought to be. It’s no bad thing, as I told you before, to find out an uncle. By-the-by, there has been some alteration in my establishment since we parted, nephew. I have a house in Lincoln’s Inn Fields and a spare bed, if you will accept of it. We dine at six; brother Nicholas, I shall be very happy to see you, if you can stay. It will be too late to go home after dinner, but you can share my nephew’s bed.”

“ I shall be most happy to accept your kind offer for a few days, sir, if it does not incommod you,” replied Newton.

“ No ; you will not incommod me *there*, but you do very much *here*, where I am always busy ; so good-by, my boy, I shall be at home at six. Brother Nicholas, you did not vouchsafe me an answer.”

“ About what, brother John ?” replied Nicholas, who had been “ in the clouds.”

“ Oh, I ’ll tell you all about it, father,” said Newton, laughing. “ Come away now, my uncle is busy ;” and Nicholas rose up, with the observation.

“ Brother John, you appear to me to read a great deal.”

“ Yes, I do, brother.”

“ How much do you read in a day ?”

“ I really cannot say ; much depends upon whether I am interrupted or not.”

“ It must be very bad for your eyes, brother John.”

“ It certainly does not improve them,” replied the lawyer, impatiently.

“ Come, father, my uncle is very busy,” said Newton, touching Nicholas on the arm.

“ Well, good-by, brother John. I had something to say—oh ! I hope you are not displeased at my not coming to see you before?”

“ Humph ! not in the least, I can assure you, brother Nicholas; so good-by. Newton, you ’ll bring him with you at six,” said Mr. John Forster, and he resumed his brief before they had quitted the room.

Newton was much surprised to hear that his uncle had taken a house, and he surmised whether he had not also been induced to take a wife. He felt an inclination to put the question to Mr. Scratton, as he passed through the office, but checked the wish, lest it should appear like prying into his uncle’s affairs. Being the month of February, it was dark long before six o’clock, and Newton was puzzled what to do with his father until that time. He returned to the Salopian

Coffee House, opposite to which they had been put down by the Greenwich coach, and, taking possession of a box, called for some biscuits and a pint of sherry, and requesting his father to stay there until his return, went out to purchase a sextant, and some other nautical luxuries, which his pay enabled him to procure without trespassing upon the funds supplied by the generosity of his uncle. He then returned to his father, who had finished the wine and biscuits, and had his eyes fixed upon the ceiling of the room; and, calling a hackney-coach, drove to the direction which his uncle had pointed out as his residence.

Mr. John Forster had already come home; and they found him in the dining-room, decanting the wine for dinner, with Amber by his side. Newton was surprised at the appearance of a little girl; and, as he took her proffered hand, inquired her name.

“ Amber. Papa says it’s a very foolish name; don’t you, papa?”

“ Yes, my dear, I do; but now we are going

to dinner, and you must go to Mrs. Smith ; so good night."

Amber kissed the old lawyer, as he stooped to her, and wishing the company good night, she left the room.

" Brother John," said Nicholas, " I really had no idea that you were a married man."

" Humph ! I am not a married man, brother."

" Then pray, brother, how is it *possible* for that little girl to be your daughter ?"

" I did not say she was my daughter : but now we will go up stairs into the drawing-room, while they put the dinner on the table."

The dinner was soon announced ; the cookery was plain but good, the wine excellent. When the dessert was placed on the table, Mr. John Forster rose, and taking two bottles of Port wine from the sideboard, placed them on the table, and addressed Newton.

" Nephew, I have no time to *sip* wine, although it is necessary that I drink it. Now, we must drink fast, as I have only ten minutes to spare ;

not that I wish you to drink more than you like, but I must push the bottle round, whether you fill or no, as I have an appointment, what we call a consultation, at my chambers. Pass the bottle, brother," continued the lawyer, helping himself, and shoving the decanter to Nicholas.

Nicholas, who had been little accustomed to wine, obeyed mechanically, swallowing down each glass *à gorge déployée*, as he was awoke from his meditations by the return of the bottle, and then filling up his glass again. Newton, who could take his allowance as well as most people, could not however venture to drink glass for glass with his uncle, and the bottle was passed several times without his filling. When the ten minutes had elapsed, Mr. John Forster took his watch from the table, replaced it in his fob, and rose from his chair. Locking up the remainder of the wine, he quitted the house without apology, leaving his guests to entertain themselves and order tea when they felt inclined.

" My brother seems to be very busy, Newton,"

observed Nicholas. "What wine was that we have been drinking? It was very strong; I declare my head turns round;" and in a few moments more Nicholas dropped his head upon the table, and was fast asleep.

"Newton, who perceived that his father was affected by the wine which he had been drinking, which was, in the sum total, a pint of sherry at the coffee-house before dinner, and at least a bottle during and after his meal, thought it better that he should be allowed to take his nap. He therefore put out the candles and went up into the drawing-room, where he amused himself with a book until the clock struck twelve. According to the regulations of the house, the servants had retired to bed, leaving a light in the passage for their master on his return, which sometimes was at a very late hour, or rather, it should be said, at a very early one. Newton lighted a chamber candlestick and went down into the parlour to rouse his father; but all his attempts were in vain. The wine had taken such an effect upon him, that he was in a

state of lethargy. Newton observed that the servant had cleared the table, and that the fire was out; and, as there was no help for it, he removed the chairs to the end of the room, that his father might not tumble over them if he awoke in the dark, and then retired to his own bed.

CHAPTER VI.

Angels and ministers of grace defend us !

* * * *

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee.

SHAKSPEARE.

IT was past two o'clock when Mr. John Forster returned from his chambers and let himself in with a pass-key. Having secured the street-door, the old gentleman lighted his candle from the lamp, which he then blew out, and had his foot upon the first step of the stairs, when he was startled by a loud snore from Nicholas in the dining-room ; he immediately proceeded there, and found his brother, with his head still lying on the table.

“ Humph !” ejaculated the lawyer. “ Why, brother Nicholas ! brother Nicholas !”

Nicholas, who had nearly slept off the effects of the wine, answered with an unintelligible sort of growling.

“ Brother Nicholas, I say—brother Nicholas—will you get up, or lie here all night ?”

“ They shall be cleaned and ready by to-morrow morning,” replied Nicholas, dreaming.

“ Humph ! that’s more than you will be, apparently.—I say, brother Nicholas.”

“ Yes, brother,” replied Nicholas, raising his head and staring at the candle. “ Why, what’s the matter ?”

“ The matter is, that I wish to go to bed, and wish to see you in bed before I go myself.”

“ Yes, brother John ; if you please, certainly. Where’s my bed ? I do believe I have been asleep.”

“ Humph ! I have no doubt upon the subject,” replied John Forster, lighting another candle.

“ Come this way, brother Nicholas,” and they both ascended the stairs.

When Mr. John Forster arrived at the door of his own room, on the first story, he stopped. “ Now, brother Nicholas, are you quite awake? Do you think that I may trust you with the candle?”

“ I should hope so,” replied Nicholas; “ I see that it is silver, but I hope I’m honest, brother John.”

“ Humph! I mean, can I trust you to put it out?”

“ Yes, I think that you may. Pray which is my room?”

“ The first door on the left when you are at the top of the stairs.”

“ The first door.”

“ Yes, the first on the left; do you understand?”

“ Yes, brother, I do; the first door on the left.”

“ Very well; then I wish you a good-night.”

“ Good-night, brother,” replied Nicholas, as-

cending the stairs, as John Forster entered his room.

Nicholas arrived at the head of the stairs; but his brain was not very clear. He muttered to himself, "I think I'm right—yes, I'm right—the first door—to the right—yes—that's it," and instead of the room to the left, where Newton was, he walked into the one to the right, which appertained to the housekeeper, Mrs. Smith.

The old lady was fast asleep. Nicholas threw off his clothes, put out his candle, and stepped into bed without waking the old lady, whom he supposed to be his son, and in a few minutes they snored in concert.

The morning dawned. The watchmen (London nightingales) ceased their notes and retired to their beds. The chimney-sweeps (larks of the metropolis) raised their shrill cry as they paced along with chattering teeth. Housemaids and kitchen-maids presented their back views to the early passengers, as they washed off the accumulation of the previous day from the steps of the

front-door. “ Milk below” (certainly much below “ proof”) was answered by the ascent of the busy cooks, when a knock at the door of Mrs. Smith’s room from the red knuckles of the housemaid, awoke her to a sense of her equivocal situation.

At her first discovery that a man was in her bed, she uttered a scream of horror, throwing herself upon her knees, and extending her hands before her in her amazement. The scream awoke Nicholas, who, astonished at the sight, and his modesty equally outraged, also threw himself in the same posture, facing her, and recoiling. Each looked aghast at each ; each considered the other as the lawless invader ; but before a word of explanation could pass between them, their countenances changed from horror to surprise, from surprise to anxiety and doubt.

“ Why !” screamed the housekeeper, losing her breath with astonishment.

“ It is !” cried Nicholas, retreating farther.

“ Yes—yes—it is—my *dear* Nicholas !”

“ No!—it can’t be,” replied Nicholas, hearing the fond appellation.

“ It is—oh! yes—it is your poor unhappy wife, who begs your pardon, Nicholas,” cried the housekeeper, bursting into tears, and falling into his arms.

“ My dear—dear wife!” exclaimed Nicholas, as he threw his arms around her, and each sobbed upon the other’s shoulder.

In this position they remained a minute, when Mr. John Forster, who heard the scream and subsequent exclamations, and had taken it for granted that his brother had been guilty of some *contre temps*, first wiped the remaining lather from his half-shaved chin, and then ascended to the housekeeper’s room, from whence the noise had proceeded. When he opened the door, he found them in the position we have described, both kneeling in the centre of the bed, embracing and sobbing. They were so wrapt in each other, that they did not perceive his entrance. Mr. John Forster stared with amazement for a few seconds, and thus growled out:—

“ Why, what are you two old fools about ? ”

“ It ’s my husband, sir”—“ It ’s my wife, brother John,” cried they, both at once, as the tears coursed down their cheeks.

“ Humph ! ” ejaculated the lawyer, and he quitted the room.

We must let the reader imagine the various explanations which took place between Nicholas and his truly reformed wife, Newton and his uncle, Amber, and every body in the household, while we narrate the events which had brought about this singular *dénouement*.

The reader may recollect that we left Mrs. Forster in the lunatic asylum, slowly recovering from an attack of the brain-fever, which had been attended with a relapse. For many weeks she continued in a state of great feebleness, and during that time, when in the garden, in company with the other denizens of this melancholy abode, (wishing to be usefully employed,) she greatly assisted the keepers in restraining them, and, in a short time, established that superiority

over them, which is invariably the result of a sane intellect. This was soon perceived by Doctor Beddington, who (aware of her destitute condition) offered her a situation as nurse in the establishment, until the inspecting magistrates should make their appearance, with the promise that she might continue in it afterwards, if she thought proper. This proposal was accepted by Mrs. Forster, until she might resolve what course to take, and she soon became a most invaluable person in the establishment, effecting more by lenient and kind treatment than the keepers were able to do by their violence. So completely changed was Mrs. Forster in disposition, that so far from feeling any resentment against those who had been the means of her confinement, she acknowledged to herself that her own conduct had been the occasion of her misfortune, and that those who had contributed to open her eyes to her former insanity, were her best friends. She was humbled and unhappy, but she kissed the rod. All that she now wished was to find out

her husband, and by her future conduct to make reparation for the past. One of the gaolers, at her request, made every inquiry as to the part of England Nicholas had removed ; but it was without success. All trace was lost, and Mrs. Forster accepted the situation of nurse, until she might be enabled to prosecute her search, or obtain the intelligence which she desired.

For nine months Mrs. Forster remained on the establishment, during which time she had saved a sum of money sufficient for her support and travelling expenses. She then resolved to search after her husband, whose pardon for her previous conduct seemed to be the *sine qua non* for which she continued to exist. She took leave of the doctor ; and, strange to say, it was with feelings of regret that she quitted an abode, once the source of horror and disgust : but time reconciles us to every thing, and she made a half promise to Doctor Beddington, that if she could not hear any tidings of her husband, or should discover

that he was no more, that she would return to the situation.

Mrs. Forster directed her course to London ; why, or wherefore, she hardly knew ; but she had imbibed the idea that the metropolis was the most likely place to meet with him. Her first inquiries were about any families of the name of Forster ; but the Directory gave such an enormous list of Forsters, of all trades and callings, and in every situation in life, that she closed it with despair. She had a faint recollection that her husband (who was never very communicative, and least of all to her,) had stated that he had a brother alive somewhere ; but this was all that she knew. Nevertheless, she set about her task in good earnest, and called upon every one of the name in the middling classes of life, to ascertain if they were relations of her husband. There were many in high life whose names and addresses she had obtained from the Red-book ; but to them she dared not apply. All she could do was to question the servants ; but every answer was unsatis-

factory; and Mrs. Forster, whose money was nearly expended, had serious thoughts of returning to the lunatic establishment, when the advertisement in the newspapers of Mr. Scratton, for a housekeeper, which Mr. John Forster had desired him to procure, met her eye. Unwilling to leave London, she applied for, and obtained the situation, having received an excellent character from Doctor Beddington, to whom she had written and explained her views.

Her heart leapt when she discovered that her master's name was Forster; and when she first saw him she could not but persuade herself that there was a family likeness. The germs of hope were, however, soon withered, when Amber, in answer to her inquiries, stated, that Mr. Forster had a brother lately dead, who had never been married, and that she never heard of his having another. Her fellow-servants were all as strange as herself; and Mrs. Forster (who had assumed the name of Smith) was obliged to have recourse to that patience and resignation which had been

so severely inculcated. The charge of Amber soon proved a source of delight; the controul which she had over the household a source of gratification, (not as before, for the pleasure of domineering, but for the sake of exercising kindness and forbearance,) and Mrs. Forster was happy and resigned.

It may be surmised as strange, that during the period which she remained in this capacity, she had never heard mention made of her husband or her son; but it must be remembered that Nicholas had never called upon his brother, and that Newton was in the East Indies; and, moreover, that Mr. John Forster was just as little inclined to be communicative as her husband. Indeed, he never came in contact with his housekeeper, except to pay the bills, which was regularly once a month, when he called her down after dinner, and after the accounts were settled, offered her a glass of wine, as a proof of his being satisfied with her conduct. When Newton and his father arrived at the chambers on the day before the discovery,

and were invited to dinner, his note of communication was as laconic as usual.

“ Mrs. Smith—I have invited two gentlemen to dine with me to-day, six precisely.

“ John Forster.

“ P. S.—Let the spare bed be ready.”

Mrs. Forster prepared every thing as directed, and having done her duties below, retired to her room, where she usually sat with Amber. She did not therefore see the parties when they entered; and Amber, who had run down to meet her protector, heard nothing during her short stay in the room to suppose that they were relatives of Mr. John Forster. All that she had to communicate was, that the parties were an elderly gentleman and a very handsome young man.

Yet, even this simple communication caused the pulse of Mrs. Forster to accelerate. They might be her husband and her son. It was the first time that the spare bed had been ordered. Reflection, however, convinced her that her hopes

were strung upon too slight a thread ; and, musing on the improbability of not having ascertained during a year the fact of her master having so near a relative—moreover, her son was not in existence, she sighed, and dismissed the idea as ridiculous. Before the gentlemen had finished their wine Amber was in bed, and Mrs. Forster invariably sat at the side of it until her own hour of repose had arrived. A certain indefinable curiosity still remained lurking ; yet, as she could not gratify it without intrusion, (if the strangers were still up,) she retired to bed, with the reflection, that all her doubts would be relieved in the morning ; and, after lying awake for some hours in a state of suspense, she at last fell into that sound sleep, which is usually produced by previous excitement. How she was awakened from it, the reader has been already informed.

“ It’s rather awkward, Newton,” said Mr. John Forster, about ten days afterwards. “ I cannot do without your mother, that’s certain ; but what am I to do with your father ? Humph !

Well, she must take charge of him as well as Amber. She must teach him—”

“ Teach him what, sir ?” replied Newton, laughing.

“ Teach him what ? Why, to leave my watch and spectacles alone ; I dare not lay them down for a moment.”

“ I think we may teach him that, sir, if it is all that you require.”

“ I ask no more ; then he may go about the house like a tame rabbit. When will your ship be ready, boy ?”

“ In about a fortnight, sir. I called upon Captain Oughton the day before yesterday, but he was not at home. His steward gave me the information.”

“ What is the name of the ship ?”

“ The Windsor Castle, sir.”

“ Why all the India ships appear to be called Castles. Your last ship was the Bombay Castle, I think ?”

“ Yes, sir ; there are a great many of them

so named :—they really are floating castles.”

“ And full of ladies. You ‘ castle your queens,’ as they do at chess. Humph !”

A pun from Mr. John Forster was a rarity ; he never had been known to make one before ; and Newton asserts that he never heard him guilty of it afterwards. It deserves, therefore, bad as it was, to be recorded.

CHAPTER VII.

— but to stick to my route
'Twill be hard, if some novelty can't be struck out.
Is there no Algerine, no Kamschatkan arrived?
No plenipo-pacha, three tailed and three wived?
No Russian, whose dissonant, consonant name
Almost rattles to fragments the trumpet of fame?

POSTSCRIPT.

By the by, have you found any friend who can construe
That Latin account, t'other day, of a monster?
If we can't get a Russian—and that story in Latin
Be not *too* improper, I think I'll bring that in.

Moore.

A FEW mornings after this colloquy with his uncle, Newton was very busy perambulating the streets of London, in search of various requisites for his trip to India, when his hand was seized before he had time to call to mind the features

of the party who shook it with such apparent warmth.

“ My dear Mr. Forster, I am so delighted to see you, so happy to hear of your gallant adventure with the French squadron. Mrs. Plausible will be quite pleased at meeting her old shipmate; she often talks about you. I must make sure of you,” continued the doctor, drawing from his pocket a large packet of cards, and inserting at the top of one, Newton Forster’s name with his pencil. “ This is an invitation to our *conversazione* of to-morrow night, which you must do us the honor to accept. We shall have all the scientific men of the day, and a very pretty sprinkling of nobility, if not something more. However, you will see. Shall I tell Mrs. Plausible that you will come, or will you disappoint her?”

“ Why,” replied Newton, “ if I possibly can I will. I presume the hour is not very precise?”

“ O no, from nine until two or three; but, if you wish to see great people, about eleven is the exact time.”

" Well, then," replied Newton, " the time which suits great people also suits me. I hope Mrs. Plausible is quite well."

" Quite well, I thank you. Good-by;" and Dr. Plausible hurried off so quickly, that Newton was induced to look after him, to ascertain what could induce such precipitation. He perceived Dr. Plausible shaking hands warmly with another gentleman, and after a few seconds, the packet of cards was again pulled out of his pocket, and the pencil in requisition. It will be necessary to go back a little, to acquaint the reader with what had occurred since the acceptance of Dr. Plausible by Miss Tavistock, when they were on board of the *Bombay Castle*. On their arrival at Madras, Miss Tavistock's early and dearest friend, who resided in the up-country, had commissioned an acquaintance to receive Miss Tavistock until they could make arrangements for her journey to the interior. By this female acquaintance Miss Tavistock was kindly welcomed, and received into her house; but Miss

Tavistock's prospects having altered, so had all her devoted attachments to the friend of her early years. She wrote, announcing her intended change of condition, and regretting that Dr. Plausible's affairs, requiring his immediate presence in England, would prevent her having the delight of embracing one, who was so entwined round her heart. The letter was nevertheless very cold, and Miss Tavistock was very much abused by her dearest friend, who, disappointed in her expectations, did not even condescend an answer. In a week Miss Tavistock was united to Dr. Plausible, and in less than a fortnight afterwards they were on their passage home. Dr. Plausible found that his wife's report of her circumstances was correct, and that now he had the means of keeping his carriage and of seeing company, in moderation. Shortly after their return Dr. Plausible took the lease of a house in a betwixt and between fashionable street, and not wishing to remain idle, attempted to get into practice as an accoucheur; for although the for-

tune brought by his wife was considerable, still, to keep his carriage in London, he was obliged “to sail nearer to the wind,” in other points than he found agreeable: moreover, he was ambitious. A night-bell, with “night-bell” in capital letters over it, that people might be aware in the broad day that it was a night-bell, which of course they could not read in the dark, was attached to one side of the street door. It was as loud as an alarm-bell, and when rung, was to be heard from No. 12 to No. 44, in the street where Dr. Plausible resided.

There are little secrets in all trades; and one is, how to obtain practice as a medical man, which whole mystery consists in making people believe that you have a great deal. When this is credited practice immediately follows; and Doctor Plausible was aware of the fact. At first setting off his carriage drew up to the door occasionally, and stood there for some time, when the doctor made his appearance, and stepped in. He then took a round of about three hours through every

fashionable part of the town, sitting well forward, that every body might see him, apparently examining his visiting-book. At times he would pull up at some distinguished person's door, when there were two or three carriages before him, and getting out, would go in to the porter to ask some frivolous question. Another *ruse* was to hammer at some titled mansion, and inquire for another titled person, by mistake. This occupied the morning; after which Doctor Plausible returned home. During the first month the night-bell was rung two or three times a week by the watchman, who was fee'd for his trouble; but after that period it increased its duties, until it was in motion once, if not twice, every night, and his disturbed neighbours wished Doctor Plausible and his extensive practice at the devil. The carriage also was now rattled to the door in a hurry, and Doctor Plausible was seen to enter it with his case of instruments, and drive off with rapidity, sometimes twice a day. In the mean time Mrs. Plausible did her part, as she

extended her acquaintance with her neighbours. She constantly railed against a medical husband; declared that Doctor Plausible was never at home, and it was impossible to say at what hour they might dine. The tables also were strewed with the cards of great and fashionable people, obtained by Doctor Plausible from a celebrated engraver's shop, by a douceur to the shopman, when the master was absent. At last Doctor Plausible's instruments were used in good earnest; and, although not known or even heard of in the fashionable world, he was sent for by the would-be-fashionables, because they imagined that he was employed by their betters. Now it so happened that in the same street there lived another medical man, almost a prototype of Doctor Plausible, only not quite so well off in the world. His name was Doctor Feasible. His practice was not extensive, and he was incumbered with a wife and large family. He also very naturally wished to extend his practice and his reputation; and, after many fruitless attempts, he at last hit

upon a scheme which he thought promised to be successful.

“ My dear,” said he, one morning to his wife, “ I am thinking of getting up a *conversazione*.”

“ A *conversazione*, my love!—why, is not that a very expensive affair?”

“ Why, not very. But if it brings me practice, it will be money well laid out.”

“ Yes, my love, if it does, and if we had the money to lay out.”

“ Something must be done. I have hardly a patient left. I have an idea that it will succeed. Go, my dear, and make up this prescription, and let the boy take it to Mrs. Bluestone’s. I wish I had a couple of dozen patients like her. I write her prescription, take my fee, and then, that I may be sure that it is properly made up, I volunteer to take it to the chemist’s myself.”

“ Pray, what is the complaint of Mrs. Bluestone, my love?”

“ Nothing ; she over-eats herself—that’s all. Abernethy would cure her in twenty-four hours.”

“ Well, but, my love, about this *conversazione*?”

“ Go and make up the prescription, my dear, and we ’ll talk the matter over afterwards.”

They did so. A list of the people they were acquainted with was drawn out, the expense calculated, and the affair settled.

The first point to be considered was the size of the cards.

“ These, my love,” said Mrs. Feasible, who came in from a long walk with her bonnet still on, “ these are three shillings and sixpence a hundred; and these, which are a size larger, are four-and-sixpence. Which do you think we ought to have?”

“ Why, really, my dear, when one sends out so many, I do not see why we should incur unnecessary expense. The three-and-sixpenny ones are quite large enough.”

“ And the engraving will be fourteen shillings.”

“ Well, that will only be a first expense. *Conversazione* in old English, of course.”

“ And here, my love, are the ribbons for the maids’ caps and sashes ; I bought them at Waterloo House, very cheap, and a very pretty candle-light colour.”

“ Did you speak to them about their gowns ?”

“ Yes, my love ; Sally and Peggy have each a white gown, Betty I can lend one of my own.”

The difference between a *conversazione* and a rout is simply this :—in the former you are expected to talk or listen, but to be too ethereal to eat. In the latter, to be squeezed in a crowd, and eat ices, &c. to cool yourselves. A *conversazione* has, therefore, a great advantage over the latter, as far as the pocket is concerned, it being much cheaper to procure food for the mind than food for the body. It would appear that tea has been as completely established the beverage of modern scientific men, as nectar was formerly that of the gods. The Athenæum gives tea ; and I observed in a late newspaper, that Lord G—— has promised tea to the Geographical Society. Had his lordship been aware that there was a beverage in-

vented on board ship much more appropriate to the science over which he presides than tea, I feel convinced he would have substituted it immediately; and I therefore take this opportunity of informing him that sailors have long made use of a compound which actually goes by the name of *geo-graffy*, which is only a trifling corruption of the name of the science, arising from their habit of laying the accent upon the penultimate. I will now give his lordship the receipt, which is most simple.

Take a tin pot, go to the scuttle-butt, (having obtained permission from the quarter-deck,) and draw off about half a pint of very offensive smelling water. To this add a gill of vinegar and a ship's biscuit broke up into small pieces. Stir it well up with the fore-finger; and then with the fore-finger and thumb you may pull out the pieces of biscuit, and eat them as fast as you please, drinking the liquor, to wash all down.

Now this would be the very composition to hand round to the Geographical Society. It is not

christened geography without a reason ; the vinegar and water representing the green sea, and the pieces of biscuit floating in it the continents and islands which are washed by it.

Now, my lord, do not you thank me for my communication ?

But we must return to the *conversazione* of Doctor and Mrs. Feasible.

The company arrived. There was rap after rap. The whole street was astounded with the noise of the wheels and the rattling of the iron steps of the hackney-coaches. Doctor Feasible had procured some portfolios of prints ; some Indian idols from a shop in Wardour Street, duly labelled and christened, and several other odds and ends, to create matter of conversation. The company consisted of several medical gentlemen and their wives, the great Mr. B—, and the facetious Mr. C—. There were ten or twelve authors, or gentlemen suspected of authorship, fourteen or fifteen chemists, all scientific of course, one colonel, half-a-dozen captains, and, to crown all, a city knight

and his lady, besides their general acquaintance, unscientific and unprofessional. For a beginning this was very well ; and the company departed very hungry, but highly delighted with their evening's entertainment.

“ What can all that noise be about ? ” said Mrs. Plausible to her husband, who was sitting with her in the drawing-room, reading the Lancet, while she knotted, or *did not*.

“ I am sure I cannot tell, Mrs. Plausible.”

“ There, again ! I 'm sure if I have heard one, I have heard thirty raps at a door within this quarter of an hour. I 'm determined I will know what it is,” continued Mrs. Plausible, getting up and ringing the bell.

“ Thomas, do you know what all that noise is about ? ” said Mrs. Plausible, when the servant answered the bell.

“ No, ma'am, I doesn't.”

“ Well, then, go and see.”

“ Yes, ma'am.

The impatience of Mrs. Plausible, during the

absence of Thomas, increased with the repetition of the knocks.

“Well, Thomas?” said she, as the footman entered.

“If you please, ma’am, Mr. Feasible has got a conversation—that’s all.”

“Got a what?”

“A *conversazione* he means, my dear. It’s very strange that Doctor Feasible should pretend to give such a thing!”

“I think so too,” replied the lady. “He keeps no carriage. What can be his inducement?”

“I perceive,” replied Doctor Plausible, “he wants to get practice. Depend upon it that’s his plan. A sprat to catch mackerel!”

Husband and wife were again silent, and resumed their occupations; but the *Lancet* was not read, and the knotting was all in knots, for they were both in a brown study. At last Mrs. Plausible commenced.—

“I really do not see, my dear, why we should

not give a *conversazione* as well as Doctor Feasible?"

"I was just thinking that we could give them much better; our acquaintance now is very numerous."

"And very respectable," replied the lady; "it will make us more known in the world."

"And add to my practice. I'll soon beat Doctor Feasible out of the field!"

The result of this conversation was a *conversazione*, which certainly was on a much better scale, and better attended than the one collected by Doctor Feasible. Doctor Plausible had pumped a mutual acquaintance as to the merits of his rival, and had set to work with great diligence.

He ordered his carriage, and for two or three days previous to the one fixed went round to all his friends who had curiosities, foreign, indigenous, or continental, admired them, talked learnedly, expressed a wish to exhibit them to several gentlemen of taste at his next *conversazione*, pulled

out a card for the party, and succeeded in returning home with his carriage stuffed with curiosities and monstrosities.

Negus and cherry-water were added to tea in the refreshment room ; and the *conversazione* of Doctor Plausible was pronounced by those who had been invited to both, infinitely superior to that of Doctor Feasible. A good-natured friend called upon Doctor and Mrs. Feasible with the news. They pretended indifference, as they bit their lips to conceal their vexation. As soon as he took his leave—

“ Well, my dear,” said Mrs. Feasible, “ what do you think of this ? Very unhandsome on the part of Dr. Plausible ! I was told this morning that several of our acquaintances have expressed a wish to be introduced to him.”

“ We must not give up the point, my love. Doctor Plausible may make a splash once ; but I suspect that his horses eat him out of house and home, and interfere very much with the butcher’s bills. If so, we who keep no carriage

can afford it better. But it's very annoying, as there will be an increase of expense."

"Very annoying, indeed!" replied the lady. "Look at his card, my dear, it is nearly twice as large as ours. I begged it of Mr. Tomkins, on purpose to compare it."

"Well, then, my dear, we must order others, and mind that they measure an inch more than his. It shall cost him something before we have done, I'm determined."

"You heard what Mr. Smithson said? they gave negus and cherry-water."

"We must do the same. I've a great mind to give ices."

"Oh! my love, remember the expense."

"Very true; but we can ice our negus and cherry-water. Rough ice is only two-pence a pound, I believe."

"Well, that will be an improvement."

"And there shall be more, or I'll be in the Bench," replied the doctor, in his wrath.

The next *conversazione*, for which cards were

issued by Doctor Feasible, was on a superior scale. There was a considerable increase of company. He had persuaded a country baronet; secured the patronage of two ladies of rank (with a slight blot on their escutcheons), and collected, amongst others, a French count, (or adventurer,) a baron with mustachios, two German students in their costumes and long hair, and an actress of some reputation. He had also procured the head of a New Zealand chief; some red snow, or rather red water, (for it was melted,) brought home by Captain Ross; a piece of granite from the Croker mountains; a kitten in spirits, with two heads and twelve legs, and half-a-dozen abortions of the feathered or creeping tribes. Every thing went off well. The two last fees he had received were sacrificed to have the party announced in the Morning Post, and Doctor Feasible's triumph was complete.

But it was not to last long. In ten days Dr. Plausible's cards were again issued, larger than Dr. Feasible's, and with a handsome em-

bossed border of lilies and roses. Male attendants, tea and coffee, ices and liqueurs, were prepared ; and Dr. Feasible's heart failed him, when he witnessed the ingress and egress of the pastry-cooks, with their boxes on their heads. Among his company he had already mustered up five celebrated blues ; four ladies of quality, of better reputation than Dr. Feasible's ; seven or eight baronets and knights ; a bishop of Fernando Po ; three or four general officers ; and a dozen French and German visitors to the country, who had not only titles, but wore orders at their button-holes. Thus far had he advanced when he met Newton Forster, and added him to his list of the invited. In about two hours afterwards Dr. Plausible returned home to his wife, radiant with smiles.

“ My dear, who *do* you think has promised to come to-morrow night ? ”

“ Who, my love ? ”

“ Prince Fizzybelli ! ”

“ You don't say so ? ” screamed the lady with her delight.

“ Yes, most faithfully promised.”

“ What *will* the Feasibles say?” cried the lady;—but—is he a real prince?”

“ A real prince! O yes, indeed is he! well known in Tartary.”

“ Well, Dr. Plausible, I have good news for you. Here is a note from Mr. H—, in answer to yours, in which he promises you the loan of the wax figure from Germany, of a female in the first stage of par—partu—I can’t make out the word.”

“ Excellent! most excellent!” cried the doctor, rubbing his hands, “ now we *shall* do.”

Newton, who had some curiosity to see a *conversazione*, which to him was a *terra incognita*, did not fail to go at the appointed hour. He was ushered up stairs into the drawing-room, at the door of which he was received by Mrs. Plausible, in blue and silver. The rooms not being very large, were extremely crowded, and Newton at one moment found himself jammed against some curiosity, and at another treading on the toes or heels of people who accepted his apologies,

looking daggers, and with a snarling "don't mention it."

But a thundering knock at the door was followed by the announcement of his Highness Prince Fizzybelli—Prince Fizzybelli at the door—Prince Fizzybelli coming up—Prince Fizzybelli (enters).

Had it been permitted, Dr. Plausible would have received his guest with a flourish of trumpets, as great men are upon the stage, without which it is impossible now-a-days to know a great man from a little one. However, the hired attendants did their duty, and the name of Fizzybelli was fizzed about the room in every direction. Dr. Plausible trod on the corns of old Lady G——, upset Miss Periwinkle, and nearly knocked down a French *savant*, in his struggle to obtain the door to receive his honoured guest, who made a bow, looked at the crowd—looked at the chandelier—looked at his watch, and looked very tired in the course of five minutes, when Prince Fizzybelli ordered his carriage, and was off.

Newton, who had examined several very strange

things which occupied the tables about the room, at last made his way to the ante-room, where the crowd was much more dense than elsewhere. Taking it for granted that there was something interesting to be seen, he persevered until he had forced his way to the centre, when, what was his astonishment when he beheld under a long glass-case a figure of a woman modelled in wax, of exact and certainly of beautiful proportion ! It was as large as life, and in a state of perfect nudity. The face lifted up, and discovered the muscles beneath : in fact, every part of the image could be removed, and presented to the curious every part of the human frame, modelled exact, and coloured. Newton was indeed astonished : he had witnessed several articles in the other room, which he had considered more fitted for the museum of an institution than a drawing-room ; but this was indeed a novelty ; and when, to crown all, he witnessed certain little *demireps* of science, who fancied that not to be ashamed was now as much a proof of knowledge, as in our first

parents it was of innocence, and who eyed the figure without turning away from it or blushing, he quitted the room with disgust, and returned home quite satisfied with one *conversazione*.

I am not partial to blues: generally speaking, ladies do not take up science until they find that the men will not take up them ; and a remarkably clever woman by reputation is too often a remarkably unpleasant, or a remarkably ugly one. But there are exceptions ; exceptions that a nation may be proud of—women who can fulfil their duties to their husbands and their children, to their God and to their neighbour, although endowed with minds more powerful than allotted to one man in tens of thousands. These are heavenly blues ; and, among the few, no one shines more pre-eminent than my dear Mrs. S——e.

However, whether Newton was satisfied or not, this *conversazione* was a finisher to Dr. Feasible, who resigned the contest. Dr. Plausible not only carried away the palm—but, what was still worse, he carried off the “ practice !”

CHAPTER VIII.

Their only labour is to kill the time;
And labour dire it is, and weary woe.
They sit—they lounge—turn o'er some idle rhyme;
Then rising sudden—to the glass they go,
Or saunter forth with loitering step and slow.

CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

CAPTAIN Oughton, who commanded the Windsor Castle, was an original. His figure was short and thickset, his face broad, and deeply pitted with the small-pox, his nose an apology for a nose, being a small tubercle arising midway between his eyes and mouth, the former of which were small, the latter wide, and displaying a magnificent row of white teeth. On the whole, it was impossible to look in his face without being immediately struck with his likeness to a

bull-dog. His temperament and his pursuits were also analogous; he was a great pugilist, knew the merits of every man in the ring, and the precise date and circumstances attending every battle which had been fought for the previous thirty years. His conversation was at all times interlarded with the slang terms appropriated to the science, to which he was so devoted. In other points he was a brave, and trust-worthy officer, although he valued the practical above the theoretical branches of his profession, and was better pleased when superintending the mousing of a stay or the strapping of a block, than when "flooring" the sun, as he termed it, to ascertain the latitude, or "breaking his noddle against the old woman's," in taking a lunar observation. Newton had been strongly recommended to him, and Captain Oughton extended his hand as to an old acquaintance when they met on the quarter-deck. Before they had taken a dozen turns up and down Captain Oughton inquired if Newton could handle the mauleys; and, on being an-

swered in the negative, volunteered his instruction during their passage out.

“ You heard the end of it, I suppose ? ” said Captain Oughton, in continuance.

“ The end of what, sir ? ”

“ What ! why, the fight. Spring beat. I ’ve cleared three hundred by him.”

“ Then, sir, I am very glad that Spring beat,” replied Newton.

“ I ’ll back him against a stone heavier any day in the week. I ’ve got the newspaper in the cabin, with the fight—forty-seven rounds ; but we can’t read it now ; we must see after these soldiers and their traps. Look at them,” continued Captain Oughton, turning to a party of the troops ordered for a passage, who were standing on the gangway and booms ; “ every man Jack, with his tin pot in his hand, and his great-coat on. Twig the drum-boy, he has turned his coat—do you see, with the lining outwards to keep it clean. By Jove, that’s a *winkle* ! ”

“ How many officers do you expect, Captain Oughton ?”

“ I hardly know, they make such alterations in their arrangements ; five or six, I believe. The boat went on shore for them at nine o’clock. They have sent her back, with their compliments, seven times already, full of luggage. There’s one lieutenant, I forget his name, whose chests alone would fill up the main-deck. There’s six under the half-deck,” said Captain Oughton, pointing to them.

“ Lieutenant Winterbottom,” observed Newton, reading the name.”

“ I wish to Heaven that he had remained the winter, or that his chests were all to the bottom ! I don’t know where the devil we are to stow them. O ! here they come ! Boatswain’s mate, ‘tend the side there.”

In a minute or thereabouts, the military gentlemen made their appearance one by one on the quarter-deck, scrutinising their gloves as they bade adieu to the side-ropes, to ascertain if they

had in any degree been defiled by the adhesive properties of the pitch and tar.

Captain Oughton advanced to receive them. "Welcome, gentlemen," said he, "welcome on board. We trip our anchor in half an hour. I am afraid that I have not the pleasure of knowing your names, and must request the honour of being introduced."

"Major Clavering, sir," said the major, a tall handsome man, gracefully taking off his hat; "the officers who accompany are (waving his hand towards them in succession) Lieutenant Winterbottom."

Lieutenant Winterbottom bowed.

"I've had the pleasure of reading Lieutenant Winterbottom's name several times this forenoon," observed Captain Oughton, as he returned the salute.

"You refer to my luggage, I'm afraid, Captain Oughton?"

"Why, if I must say it, I certainly think you have enough for a general."

“ I can only reply that I wish my rank were equal to my luggage : but it is a *general* complaint every time I have the misfortune to embark. I trust, Captain Oughton, it will be the only one you will have to make of me during the passage.”

Major Clavering, who had waited during this dialogue, continued—

“ Captain Majoribanks, whom I ought to apologise to for not having introduced first.”

“ Not at all, major : you just heard the brevet rank which Winterbottom’s baggage has procured him.”

“ Not the first time a man has obtained rank through his ‘ baggage,’ ” observed one of the officers, *sotta voce*.

“ Mr. Ansell, Mr. Petres, Mr. Irving.”

The necessary bows were exchanged, and Mr. Williams, the first-mate, desired to show the officers to their respective accommodations, when he would be able to ascertain what part of their luggage was required, and be enabled

to strike the remainder down into the after-hold.

As the officers followed the first-mate down the companion-ladder, Captain Oughton looked at Mr. Ansell, and observed to Newton, "That fellow would *peel* well."

The Windsor Castle sailed, and in a few days was clear of the channel. Newton, whose thoughts were of Isabel Revel, felt not that regret at quitting the country, usually attached to those who leave all dear to them behind. He knew that it was by following up his profession alone that he ever could have a chance of obtaining her; and this recollection, with the hopes of again beholding the object of his affections, lightened his heart to joy, as the ship scudded across the Bay of Biscay before a N.E. gale. That he had little chance at present of possessing her, he knew; but hope leads us on, and no one more than the youth who is in love.

The table of Captain Oughton was liberally supplied, and the officers embarked proved (as

they almost invariably do) to be pleasant gentlemanlike companions. The boxing-gloves were soon produced by Captain Oughton, who soon ascertained that in the officer who "would *peel* so well," he had found his match. The mornings were passed away in sparring, fencing, reading, walking the deck, or lolling on the hen-coops upon the poop. The announcement of the dinner-hour was a signal for rejoicing; and they remained late at the table, doing ample justice to the captain's excellent claret. The evening was finished with cards, cigars, and brandy *pawnee*. Thus passed the time away for the first three weeks of the passage, during which period all parties had become upon intimate terms.

But the voyage is in itself most tedious, and more tedious to those who not only have no duty to perform, but have few resources. As soon as the younger officers thought they might take a liberty, they examined the hen-coops, and selecting the most promising looking cocks, trimmed them for fighting; chose between themselves as their

own property those which they most approved of, and for some days fed and sparred them to get them into wind, and ascertain the proper way in which they should be spurred. In the mean time, two pair of spurs were by their directions clandestinely made by the armourer of the ship, and when ready, they took advantage of the time when Captain Oughton was every day employed with the ship's reckoning, and the poultreer was at his dinner, (viz. from twelve to one) to fight a main. The cocks which were killed in these combats were returned to the hen-coops, and supposed by the poultreer, who very often had a glass of grog, to have quarrelled within the bars.

“ Steward,” said Captain Oughton, “ why the devil do you give us so many fowls for dinner? the stock will never last out the voyage: two roast fowls, two boiled fowls, curried fowl, and chicken pie! What can you be thinking of?”

“ I spoke to the poultreer on the subject, sir: he constantly brings me down fowls, and he tells me that they kill each other fighting.”

“ Fighting ! never heard of fowls fighting in a coop before. They must be all game fowls.”

“ That they are, most of them,” said Mr. Petres ; “ I have often seen them fighting when I have been on the poop.”

“ So have I,” continued Ansell ; “ I have seen worse cocks in the pit.”

“ Well, it’s very odd ; I never lost a cock this way in all my voyages. Send the poultreer here ; I must inquire about it.”

“ Yes, sir,” replied the steward, and he quitted the cabin.

With the exception of the major, who knew nothing of the circumstances, the officers thought it advisable to decamp, that they might not be present when the *dénouement* took place. The poultreer made his appearance, was interrogated, and obliged in his own defence to criminate the parties, corroborating his assertions by producing a pair of spurs found upon a cock, which had been killed, and thrown behind the coop in a hurry at the appearance of Captain Oughton on deck.

“ I am sorry that my officers should have taken such a liberty,” observed the major, gravely.

“ O never mind, major, only allow me to be even with them ; I shouldn’t have minded, if I had seen the fighting. I think you said that you would like to exercise your men a little this afternoon ?”

“ I did ; that is, if not inconvenient.”

“ Not in the least, major ; the quarter-deck is at your service. I presume you do not superintend yourself ?”

“ Yes, I generally do.”

“ Well, don’t this time, but let all the officers ; and then I shall be able to play them a little trick that will make us all square.”

Major Clavering consented. The officers were ordered up to drill their men. Captain Majoribanks and Mr. Irving had one party at the platoon exercise.

“ Third man, your hand a little higher on the barrel of your musket. As you were ; support—

the word support is only a caution—arms,—too—too.”

“ Two and two makes four,” observed one of the seamen.

Lieutenant Winterbottom had another party on the lee-side of the quarter-deck. “ Ram down—cartridge.—No. 12, slope your musket a little more—*too—too*—only two taps at the bottom of the barrel. Return—ramrods.—No. 4, why don’t you draw up the heel of your right leg level with the other? Recollect now, when you shoulder arms, to throw your muskets up smartly.—Shoulder—as you were—the word shoulder is only a caution; shoulder—arms. Dress up a little, No. 8, and don’t stick your stomach out in that way.”

Mr. Ansell and Mr. Petres had two fatigue parties on the poop, without muskets. “ To the right—face—to the right face. To the right—face—to the right—face.”

“ It’s a dead calm with them soldiers—head round the compass,” said one of the seamen to another.

“ To the left—face—quick march, to the left—turn—to the right—turn—close files—mark time—right—left—right—left—forward.”

“ Them ere chaps’ legs all going together put one in mind of a centipee—don’t they Tom ?”

“ Yes, but they don’t get on quite so fast. Holloh, what pipe’s that ?—‘ All hands, air bedding.’ ”

The ship was hauled close to the wind, which was light. At the pipe, the sailors below ran up the hatchway, and those on deck threw down their work. In a minute every hammock was out of the netting, and every seaman busy at unlashing.

“ Now, major, we had better go into the cabin,” said Captain Oughton, laughing. “ I shall, I can assure you.”

Beds and blankets which are not aired or shook more than once a month, are apt to be very full of what is termed *fluff* and *blanket hairs*, and they have a close smell, by no means agreeable. The sailors, who had an idea that the order had not been given inconsiderately, were quite delighted,

and commenced shaking their blankets on the forecastle and weather gangway, raising a cloud, which the wind carried aft upon the parties exercising upon the quarter-deck.

“What the devil is all this?” cried Captain Majoribanks, looking forward with dismay. “Order—arms.”

Lieutenant Winterbottom and half of his party were now seized with a fit of coughing. “Confound it!—shut—pans—handle—upon my soul I’m choked.”

“This is most excessively disagreeable,” observed Mr. Petres; “I made up my mind to be *tarred* when I came on board, but I had no idea that we should be *feathered*.”

“Support—d——n it, there’s no supporting this!” cried Captain Majoribanks. “Where’s Major Clavering? I’ll ask to dismiss the men.”

“They are dismissing a great many little men, forward, I suspect,” said the first-mate, laughing. “I cannot imagine what induced Captain Oughton to give the order: we never shake

bedding except when the ship 's before the wind."

This last very consoling remark made it worse than all ; the officers were in an agony. There was not one of them who would not have stood the chance of a volley from a French regiment rather than what they considered that they were exposed to. But without Major Clavering's permission they could not dismiss their men. Captain Majoribanks hastened to the cabin, to explain their very unpleasant situation, and received the major's permission to defer the exercise.

" Well, gentlemen," said Captain Oughton, " what is the matter ? "

" The matter !" replied Ansell. " Why, my flesh creeps all over me. Of all the thoughtless acts, Captain Oughton, it really beats—"

" Cock-fighting," interrupted the captain, with a loud laugh. " Now we are quits."

The officers hastened below to wash and change their dress after this very annoying retaliation on the part of Captain Oughton. When they

felt themselves again clean and comfortable, their good-humour returned, although they voted their captain not to be very refined in his ideas, and agreed with him that his practical joke beat “cock-fighting.”

I believe that there are no classes of people who embark with more regret, or quit a ship with more pleasure, than military men. Nor is it to be wondered at, if we consider the antithesis which is presented to their usual mode of life. Few military men are studious, or inclined to reading, which is almost the only resource which is to be found against the tedium of long confinement and daily monotony. I do not say this reproachfully, as I consider it arises from the peculiarity of their profession, and must be considered to be more their misfortune than their fault. They enter upon a military life just after they have left school, the very period at which, from previous and forced application, they have been surfeited with books *usque ad nauseam*. The parade, dress, the attention paid to them, which

demands civilities in return ; society, and the preference shown by the fair sex ; their happy and well-conducted mess ; the collecting together of so many young men, with all their varied plans of amusement, into which the others are easily persuaded to enter, with just sufficient duty on guard, or otherwise, not to make the duty irksome ; all delight too much at first, and, eventually from habit, too much occupy their minds, to afford time for study.

In making this observation, I must be considered to speak generally. There are many studious, many well-stored minds, many men of brilliant talents, who have improved the gift of nature by constant study and reflection, and whose conduct must be considered as the more meritorious, from having resisted or overcome the strong temptation to do otherwise, which is offered by their profession.

“ I wish,” said Irving, who was stretched out his full length on one of the coops abaft, with the front of his cap drawn over his eyes—“ I wish

this cursed voyage was at an end. Every day the same thing; no variety—no amusement;—curry for breakfast—brandy pawnee as a finish. I really begin to detest the sight of a cigar or a pack of cards."

"Very true," replied Ansell, who was stretched upon an adjacent coop in all the listlessness of idleness personified—"very true, Irving; I begin to think it worse than being quartered in a country town inhabited by nobodies, where one has nothing to do but to loll and spit over the bridge all day, till the bugle sounds for dinner."

"Oh! that ~~was~~ infinitely better; at least, you could walk away when you were tired, or exchange a word or two with a girl as she passed over it, on her way to market."

"Why don't you take a book, Irving?" observed the major, laying down the one with which he had been occupied, to join the conversation.

"A book, major? Oh, I've read until I am tired."

“ What have you read since you embarked ? ”
inquired his senior.

“ Let me see—Ansell, what have I read ? ”

“ Read ! —nothing at all—you know that.”

“ Well, perhaps so ; we have no mess-news-papers here : the fact is, major, I am not very partial to reading—I am not in the habit of it. When on shore, I have too much to do ; but I mean to read by-and-by.”

“ And pray, when may that by-and-by be supposed to arrive ? ”

“ Oh ! some day when I ’m wounded or taken prisoner, and cannot do any thing else ; then I shall read a good deal. Here ’s Captain Oughton—Captain Oughton, do you read much ? ”

“ Yes, Mr. Irving, I read a great deal.”

“ Pray, may I take the liberty to ask you what you read ? ”

“ What I read ! Why, I read Horsburgh’s Directory :—and I read—I read all the fights.”

“ I think,” observed Ansell, “ that if a man

gets through the newspaper and the novels of the day, he does a great deal."

"He reads a great deal, I grant you," replied the major; "but of what value is that description of reading?"

"There, major," replied Ansell, "we are at issue. I consider a knowledge of the passing events of the day, and a recollection of the facts which have occurred during the last twenty years, to be more valuable than all the ancient records in existence. Who talks of Cæsar or Xenophon now-a-days, except some Cambridge or Oxford prig? and of what value is that knowledge in society? The escape of a modern pickpocket will afford more matter of conversation than the famous retreat of the ten thousand."

"To be sure," replied Captain Oughton; "and a fair stand-up fight between Humphreys and Mendoza create more interest than the famous battles of —, I 'm sure I forget."

"Of Marathon and Thermopylæ; they will do," added Ansell.

“ I grant,” replied the major, “ that it is not only unnecessary, but conceited in those who would show their reading; but this does not disprove the advantages which are obtained. The mind well fed becomes enlarged; and, if I may use a simile, in the same way as your horse proves his good condition by his appearance, without people ascertaining the precise quantity of oats which has been given him; so the mind shows by its general vigour and power of demonstration, that it has been well supplied with ‘ hard food.’ ”

“ Very *hard food*, indeed,” replied Captain Oughton; “ nuts that I never could crack when I was at school, and don’t mean to break my teeth with now. I agree with Mr. Ansell, ‘ that sufficient for the day is the *knowledge* thereof.’ ”

“ Well, as the tree of knowledge was the tree of evil, perhaps that is the correct reading,” replied Ansell, laughing: “ Captain Oughton, you are a very sensible man; I hope we shall see you often at our mess, when we’re again on shore.”

“ You may say so now,” replied Captain Oughton, bluntly, “ and so have many more said the same thing to me; but you soldiers have cursed short memories in that way after you have landed.”

“ I trust, Captain Oughton,” replied Major Clavering, “ that you will not have to make that accusation general.”

“ Oh ! never mind, major, I never am affronted ; the offer is made in kindness, and at the time sincere ; but when people get on shore, and are so occupied with their own amusements, it is not to be wondered if they are thoughtless and forget. At one time, it did annoy me, I confess ; for when I say I should be happy to see a man, I mean it ; and if I did not mean it, I never would ask him. I thought that other people did the same ; but I have lived long enough to discover that a ‘ general invitation,’ means, ‘ don’t come at all.’ ”

“ Then I most certainly shall not say one word on the subject at present,” replied the major.
“ How many bells was that ? ”

“ Six; dinner will be on the table in a few minutes.”

“ Then, gentlemen, we had better go down and prepare. Why, Mr. Irving, you have not shaved this morning.”

“ No, major, I mean to do it after dinner.”

“ I should rather think that you intended to say *before*,” replied Major Clavering.

This gentlemanlike hint was taken by the young ensign, who was aware that Major Clavering, although invariably polite even in reproof, was not a commanding officer to be trifled with; and Mr. Irving made his appearance at the dinner-table with his “ chin new reaped,” and smooth as if appertaining to one of the fairer sex.

CHAPTER IX.

Come o'er the sea,
Maiden, with me,
Mine through sunshine, storm and snows ;
Seasons may roll,
But the true soul
Burns the same, where'er it goes.
Let fate frown on, so we love and part not,
'Tis life where thou art, 'tis death where thou 'rt not.

MOORE.

THE voyage was at last accomplished without adventure or interest, the Windsor Castle not having fallen in with more than two or three vessels during her passage. Happy were the military officers to hear the order given for the anchor to be let go upon their arrival in Madras Roads ; more happy were they to find themselves again on shore ; and most happy were Captain

Oughton and his officers to witness the debarkation of the troops, who had so long crowded their decks and impeded their motions. Parting was indeed "sweet sorrow," as it always will be when there is short allowance of room and still shorter allowance of water.

Newton Forster was in a state of anxiety during the quarter of an hour in which he was obliged to attend to his duty, furling the sails and squaring the yards ; and the time appeared most insupportably long until he could venture aft to make some inquiries from the dubashes, who were crowding alongside, as to the fate of Isabel Revel. Time and absence had but matured his passion, and it was seldom that Isabel was away from his thoughts. He had a faint idea formed by hope that she was partial to him ; but this was almost smothered by the fears which opposed it, when he reflected upon what might be produced by absence, importunity, and her independent spirit, which might, if not well-treated by her relation, reconcile her to a marriage which, al-

though not in every way eligible, secured to her a prospect of contentment and of peace.

At last the yards were squared to the satisfaction of the boatswain, the ropes were hauled taut, and coiled down, and the men sent below to their dinners. Newton walked aft, and the first person he met was the dubash who had attended the Bombay Castle. The cheeks of Newton flushed, and his heart throbbed quick, and his lips quivered, as he asked intelligence of the colonel and his family.

“Colonel Saib quite well, sir. Two ladies marry officer.”

“Which two?” demanded Newton, eagerly.

“Not know how call Bibi Saib’s names. But one not marry—she very handsome—more handsome than all.”

The heart of Newton bounded at this intelligence, as he knew that it must be Isabel who was still a spinster. This was shortly after corroborated by an English gentleman who came on board. Their stay at Madras was intended to be

short, and Newton resolved to ask immediate leave on shore. Apologising to Captain Oughton for making such an unusual request, which he was induced to do from intelligence he had just received relative to his friends, he expressed his anxious wish. Captain Oughton, who had reason to be highly satisfied with Newton, gave his consent in the kindest manner ; “ and, Forster, if you wish to remain, you have my permission. We will manage without you: only recollect we sail on Thursday night.” Newton was soon ready, and quitted the ship with Major Clavering ; to whose credit it ought here to be observed, that a *daily* note was despatched to Captain Oughton, requesting the pleasure of his company at the mess, until he was satisfied that, in this instance, the general invitation was sincere.

As soon as he was clear of the surf, and out of the masulah boat, Newton hired a conveyance, and drove out to the bungalo of the old colonel. He trembled as he announced his name to the butler, who ushered him half way to the receiving-

room ; and, like most of the natives, finding some difficulty in pronouncing English, contented himself with calling out "burrah saib," and then walked off. Newton found himself in the presence of the old veteran and Isabel. The latter had been reading a new publication, which she laid down at the voice of the butler announcing a visitor. But "burrah saib" may be any body ; it implies a gentleman. What then was the surprise of Isabel, who had no intimation of his arrival, when Newton Forster made his appearance ? Her exclamation of delight, as she ran to him and extended her hand, made Newton Forster but too happy ; and, as for a few seconds he held the hand not withdrawn, and looked in her beaming eyes, he quite forgot the presence of the colonel. A glance from the eye of Isabel in the direction where the old gentleman was seated brought Newton to his recollection. He walked up to the colonel, who shook hands, and declared that he was most glad to see him.

" You take up your quarters here, of course, Mr. Forster ?"

“ I shall have great pleasure in availing myself of your kind offer for a day or two,” replied Newton. “ I trust that you have been in good health since we parted.”

“ Not very; that is, latterly. I am thinking of a change of climate. I intend to go home in October. I suppose you have been informed that the two young women have married?”

“ I was told so by some one who came on board.”

“ Yes. Isabel, my dear, order a chamber for Mr. Forster.” Isabel left the room. “ Yes, both married—thought of nothing else—regularly came out on spec. In less than a month they knew the exact rank of every gentleman in the presidency; ascertained their prospects, and the value of their appointments; turned the rupees into pounds sterling; broke off a conversation with an ensign at the sight of a lieutenant; cut the lieutenant for a captain; were all smiles for a major; and actually made love themselves to any body who was above that rank and a bachelor. They made

their decision at last ; indeed pretty quick. They were only four months on my hands. Both up the country now."

" I trust they have married well, sir ? "

" That depends upon circumstances. They have married young men not used to the climate. May be widows in half a year. If their husbands weather it, of course they will come in for their share of the good things ; but I 'll warrant they will never be able to leave the country."

" Not leave the country, sir ! May I ask why ? "

" Because they have married foolish, extravagant wives, who will run them in debt ; and when once in debt, it is no easy matter in this country to get out of it. They must insure their lives for the money which they borrow ; and, as the house of agency will be gainers by their demise, of course they will not be permitted to leave the country and their chance of the *cholera morbus*. Don't you think that my niece looks remarkably well ? "

“ I do ; the climate does not appear to have affected her.”

“ Rather improved her,” replied the colonel ; “ she is not so thin as when she came on shore. God bless her ! I ’m sure, Mr. Forster, I am under great obligations to you for having persuaded me to go for the dear girl when she arrived. She has been a treasure to me ! If she has had one, she has had twenty offers since you left ; many unexceptionable ; but she has refused them all. In some instances I have persuaded her—I thought it was my duty. But no ; she has but one answer, and that is a decided one. She will not leave me. She has watched and attended me in my sickness as my own daughter. I say again, God bless her !”

It was with delight that Newton heard these encomiums upon Isabel, and her resolution not to marry. Whether it was wholly on account of not wishing to leave the colonel or not, still every delay gave him more chance of ultimate success. Isabel, who had stayed away that the colonel

might have time to make any communications to Newton, now returned, and the conversation became general. Newton entered into a narrative of what had occurred during his passage home, and amused them with his anecdotes and conversation.

In about an hour the colonel rose from his chair that he might prepare for dinner; and then it was that Newton perceived the great change which had taken place. He was no longer upright, but bowed down; his step was no longer firm, it was almost tottering; and, as he left the room, Newton's eyes met those of Isabel.

"You think him ill?" said Isabel, inquiringly.

"Yes, I do, Miss Revel. He is very much changed; his stamina appears to have been exhausted by the climate. I trust he will go home as he proposes."

"He has been ill—very ill indeed. He talks constantly of going home; he has done so for months; but when the time comes he puts it off. I wish you would persuade him."

“ I will do all I can ; but if you cannot prevail, I ’m afraid that my persuasion will be of little use.”

“ Indeed, I think otherwise ; you have power over him, Mr. Forster. I have not forgot how kindly you exercised it in my behalf. We—that is,” continued Isabel, colouring up, “ the colonel has often talked of you since you quitted us.”

“ I feel highly flattered by his remembrance,” replied Newton ; “ but you are in mourning, Miss Revel. If not a liberty from one who feels an interest in all concerning you, may I inquire for whom ?”

“ It is for my father,” replied Isabel, with emotion ; sitting down and passing her hand across her eyes.

“ I never heard of his death, and must apologise for having been so indiscreet as to renew your sorrow. How long is it since ? and what was his complaint ?”

“ He had no complaint—would to God that he

had had! He was shot in a duel," replied Isabel, as the tears coursed down her cheeks. " Oh! Mr. Forster, I trust I am resigned to the dispensations of Providence, but—that he should be summoned away at the moment when he was seeking the life of his fellow-creature, with all the worst passions in excitement—unprepared—for he was killed on the spot. These reflections will make his death a source of bitter regret, which can terminate but with existence."

" Your mother is still alive ?" inquired Newton, to change the painful subject.

" Yes, but very ill; the last accounts were very distressing; they say that her complaint is incurable."

Newton regretted having brought up so painful a subject. A few words of condolence and sympathy were offered, and they separated to prepare for dinner.

Newton remained four days under the roof of the colonel, during which time he was constantly in the society of Isabel; and when the period of

his departure arrived, he had just grounds to imagine that were all obstacles in other points removed, Isabel Revel would not, on her part, have raised any against the accomplishment of his wishes ; but their mutual dependent situations chased away all ideas of the kind for the present, and, although they parted with unconcealed emotion, not a word which could be construed into a declaration of attachment was permitted to escape his lips.

The Windsor Castle sailed for Calcutta, and in a few days anchored at Kedgeree to wait for a pilot to come down the river. During their short stay at this anchorage, Mr. Williams, the first-mate, who was an old Indian voyager, went on shore every evening to follow up his darling amusement of shooting jackalls, a description of game by no means scarce in that quarter of the world. Often remonstrated with for his imprudence in exposing himself to the heavy night-dew, he would listen to no advice. " It was very true, he acknowledged, that his brother had died

of a jungle fever in pursuing the same amusement, and, what was more, the fowling-piece in his hand belonged to his brother, who had bequeathed it to him ; but as he had never heard of two brothers dying from a jungle fever taken by shooting jackalls, he considered that the odds were strongly in his favour." This argument, however specious, did not prove good. The third morning he returned on board complaining of a head-ache and shivering. He was bled and put into his bed, which he never left again.

Before the Windsor Castle was ready to sail, the remains of Mr. Williams were consigned to the burying-ground at Diamond Harbour, and Newton Forster was promoted to the rank of first-mate of the Windsor Castle. This, as will hereafter be proved, was a most fortunate occurrence to Newton Forster. The Windsor Castle sailed with leave to call at Madras for letters or passengers, and in a few days was again at anchor in the roadstead. The first intelligence which they received upon their arrival was, that the

cholera morbus had been very fatal, and that among others, the old colonel had fallen a victim to the disease. Newton again obtained permission to go on shore to Isabel. He found her in distress at the house of a Mrs. Enderby, a lady who had lost her husband by the same ravaging epidemic, and who had long been the intimate friend of the colonel and of Isabel. Mrs. Enderby was about to return to England by the first vessel, and had advised Isabel to take so favourable an opportunity of a chaperone. Isabel, who had many reasons for wishing to leave the country, particularly the declining state of her mother's health, had consented; and it was with great pleasure that she received from Newton the information of the best cabins of the Windsor Castle not having been hitherto engaged.

The colonel's will had been opened. He had bequeathed his property, the whole of which, with the exception of his establishment in India, was invested in the English funds, to his grand-niece Isabel Revel. It amounted to nearly seventy

thousand pounds. It would be difficult to say whether Newton Forster felt glad or sorry at this intelligence. For Isabel's sake, he undoubtedly was glad, but he could not but feel that it increased the distance between them, and on that account and on that alone his reflections were painful. "Had it," thought he, "been five thousand or even ten thousand pounds, it would have been different. In the course of a few years I might have been able to produce an equivalent to it, and—but this fortune has raised her above my hopes; even if she had a prepossession in my favour, it would be dishonest to take advantage of it."

Isabel Revel had very different feelings on the subject;—she was her own mistress, and her manner to Newton was more cordial, more confidential than before. She had not forgotten that Newton had shewn the same regard and partiality for her when she was going out to India; and afterwards, when in distress, he had been her friend and admirer when in adversity. She knew his feelings

towards her, and she had appreciated his delicacy and forbearance. Lately she had seriously analysed her own, and her analysis was wound up by a mental acknowledgment, that her wealth would be valueless, if she could not share it with Newton Forster.

At the request of Mrs. Enderby, the poop cabins were engaged for Isabel and herself. Their time for preparation was short; but one day more having been obtained from Captain Oughton, through the influence of Newton, Mrs. Enderby and Isabel embarked, and the Windsor Castle spread her canvass, sailing away from pestilence and death.

CHAPTER X.

Britannia needs no bulwark,
No towers along the steep,
Her march is o'er the mountain waves,
Her home is on the deep.

CAMPBELL.

THE Windsor Castle ploughed through the vast ocean of waters before a propitious gale, laden with treasure, in the safe arrival of which so many were interested. But what were all the valuables stowed away in her frame, in the opinion of Newton Forster, in comparison with the lovely being who had intrusted them with her safe conduct to her native country! The extreme precautions adopted or suggested by Newton for security during the night—his nervous anxiety

during the day--became a source of laughter and ridicule to Captain Oughton ; who once observed to him,—“ Newton, my boy, I see how the land lies, but depend upon it the old ship won’t tumble overboard a bit sooner than before ; so one reef in the top-sails will be quite sufficient.”

Indeed, although they “ never mentioned it,” it was impossible for either of them to disguise their feelings. Their very attempts at concealment only rendered them more palpable to every one on board. Captain Oughton, who was very partial to Newton, rejoiced in his good fortune. He had no objection to young people falling or being in love on board of his ship, although he would not have sanctioned or permitted a marriage to take place during the period that a young lady was under his protection. Once landed on Deal beach, as he observed, they might “ buckle to” as soon as they pleased.

The Windsor Castle was within two hundred miles of the Mauritius, when a strange vessel was discovered on the weather beam, bearing down to

them with all the canvass she could spread. Her appearance was warlike; but what her force might be, it was impossible to ascertain at the distance she was off, and the position which she then offered, being nearly "end on."

"Can you make out her hull, Mr. Forster?" cried Captain Oughton, hailing Newton, who was at the mast-head with a glass.

"No, sir; her fore-yard is but now clear of the water, but she rises very fast."

"What do you think of her spars, Forster?" said Captain Oughton to Newton, who had just descended to the last rattling of the main-rigging.

"She's very taunt, sir, and her canvass appears to be foreign."

"I'll bet you what you please it's that d——d fellow Surcœuf. This is just his cruising ground, if the report of that neutral vessel was correct."

"Another hour will decide the point, sir," replied Newton; "but I must say I think your

surmise likely to prove correct. We may as well be ready for him : a cruiser she certainly is."

"The sooner the better, Mr. Forster. He 's but a 'rum customer,' and 'a hard hitter' by all accounts. Clear up the decks and beat to quarters."

The strange vessel came down with such rapidity, that, by the time the captain's orders were obeyed, she was not more than two miles distant.

"There 's 'in studding-sails ;'—and in devilish good style too!" observed Captain Oughton. "Now we shall see what he 's made of."

The vessel rounded to the wind as soon as she had reduced her sails, on the same tack as the Windsor Castle, displaying her broadside, as the French would say, *hérisée de canons*.

"A corvette, sir," said Newton, reconnoitring through his glass; "two-and-twenty guns besides her bridle ports.—She is French rigged;—the rake of her stern is French;—in fact, she is French all over."

"All Lombard Street to a China orange, 'tis

Surcœuf," replied Captain Oughton, who with the rest of the officers had his glass upon the vessel. There goes the tricoloured flag to prove I've won my bet. Answer the challenge. Toss my hat up.—Pshaw! I mean hoist the colours there abaft. Mr. Thomas," continued Captain Oughton, addressing the boatswain, "send the ship's company aft.—Forster, you had better see the ladies down below."

At the summons of the boatswain, the men came aft, and stood in a body on the lee-side of the quarter-deck with their hats off, and impatience in their looks.

"Now, my lads," said Captain Oughton, "if I am not mistaken, that vessel is commanded by the very best seaman that ever left a French port, and, to do him justice, he's a damnation fine fellow!—a severe punisher, and can take a mauling as well as give one."

"Yes, sir, so can we," replied several of the men together.

"I know you can, my lads; and give and take

is fair play. All I say is, let it be a fair stand-up fight, and 'may the best man win.' So now, my lads, if you're ready to come to the scratch, why, the sooner we peel the better—that's all.

"Hurrah!" cried the seamen, as they separated to their quarters; and in compliance with the injunctions of the captain, threw off their jackets, and many of them, their shirts, to prepare for the conflict.

The corvette, after she had rounded to, and exchanged colours, reduced her sails to precisely the same canvass as that carried by the Windsor Castle. This was to try her rate of sailing. In a quarter of an hour, her superiority was manifest. She then hauled up her courses, and dropped to her former position on the Windsor Castle's weather-beam.

"The fellow has the heels of us, at all events," observed Captain Oughton; "but, Forster, the ladies are not yet below. Mrs. Enderby, I am sorry to be obliged to put you in confinement for a short time.—Miss Revel, you must do me the

favour to accept of Mr. Forster's convoy below the water-line."

Newton offered his arm to Isabel, and followed Captain Oughton, who escorted Mrs. Enderby. His heart was swelling with such variety of feeling, that he could not at first trust himself to speak. When they had descended the ladder, and were picking their way, stepping over the rammers, sponges, and tackles, stretched across the main-deck, Newton observed—"This is not the first time I have been commissioned to place you in security. I trust I shall again have the pleasure of relieving you from your bondage."

Isabel's lip quivered as she replied, "I trust in God that you may, Mr. Forster!—but—I feel more anxious now than I did on the former occasion.—I—"

"I have a foreboding," interrupted Newton, "that this day's work is to make or mar me! Why, I cannot tell, but I feel more confident than the chances would warrant; but farewell, Isabel—God bless you!"—and Newton, pressing

her hand, sprung up the ladder to his station on the quarter-deck.

I have before observed that a man's courage much depends upon his worldly means or prospects. A man who has much to lose, whatever the property may consist of, will be less inclined to fight than another whose whole capital consists of a "light heart and a thin pair of breeches." Upon the same reasoning, a man in love will not be inclined to fight as another. Death then cuts off the sweetest prospect in existence. Lord St. Vincent used to say that a married man was d——d for the service. Now, (bating the honey-moon,) I do not agree with his lordship. A man in love may be inclined to play the Mark Antony; but a married man, "come what will, he has been blessed." Once fairly into action, it then is of little consequence whether a man is a bachelor, or married, or in love; the all-absorbing occupation of killing your fellow creatures makes you for the time forget whether you are a beggar or a prince.

When Newton returned on deck he found that the corvette had gradually edged down until nearly within point-blank range.

“Shall we lay the main-topsail to the mast, sir?” observed Newton. “We shall see his manœuvres.”

“Why, he hardly would be fool enough to bear down to us,” replied Captain Oughton; “he is a determined fellow, I know; but I believe not a rash one. However, we can but try.—Square the main-yard.”

As soon as the Windsor Castle was hove-to the courses of the enemy were seen to flutter a few moments in the breeze, and then the canvass was expanded. When the vessel had gathered sufficient way, she hove in stays, and crossed the Windsor Castle on the opposite tack.

“I thought so,” observed Captain Oughton. “The fellow knows what he’s about. He’ll not ‘put his head in chancery,’ that’s clear. How cautious the rascal is! it’s very like the first round of a fight,”—much manœuvring and wary sparring before they begin to make play.

The corvette stood on the opposite tack until well abaft the beam. She then wore round, and ranged up on the weather quarter of the India-man. When within two cables' length of the Windsor Castle, who had, a little before, filled her main-topsail to be in command, the Frenchman hauled up his foresail, and discovered his lower rigging manned by the ship's company, who gave a loud but hasty cheer, and then disappeared.

One cock crowing is a challenge, sure to be answered, if the antagonist is game. The English seamen sprung up to return the compliment, when Captain Oughton roared out, "To your guns, you fools! Hard down with the helm—fly the jib-sheet—check head-braces—look out now, my lads."

The corvette had already put her helm up and paid off to pass under the stern of the Windsor Castle, with the intention of raking her. The promptitude of Captain Oughton foiled the manœuvre of the Frenchman; which would have been more fatal, had the English seamen been in the

rigging to have been swept off by his grape-shot. As the Windsor Castle was thrown up on the wind, an exchange of broadsides took place, which, according to the usual custom of all well-regulated broadsides in close conflict, cut away a certain proportion of the spars and rigging, and cut up a proportion of the ships' companies. The Windsor Castle, worked by Newton, bracing round on the other tack, and the corvette rounding to on the same, the two vessels separated for a few minutes.

“ Devilish well stopped, Newton, wasn’t it ?” said Captain Oughton, showing his white teeth. Look out again—here she comes.”

The corvette again attempted to rake as she ranged up after tacking, by throwing herself up in the wind ; but Captain Oughton, watching the slightest variation of his adversary’s career, gradually edging away, and then putting his helm up, manœuvred that the broadsides should again be exchanged. This second exchange was more effectual than the first.

"A stomacher, and both down!" cried Captain Oughton, as he surveyed the deck. Be quick, Newton, hand the men below. Don't bring her to the wind yet—he has lost his way by luffing up, and cannot make play again for a few minutes."

After the second broadside the vessels were much farther apart, from the Windsor Castle running off the wind, while the corvette was too much crippled to work with her usual rapidity. This was convenient to both parties, as the last broadside had been very mischievous. The Frenchman, low in the water, had suffered less in her hull and ship's company, but more in her spars and rigging. The foremast was nearly cut in half by the carronade shot of her antagonist; her main-yard was badly wounded, and her wheel knocked to atoms; which obliged them to steer on the lower deck. The Windsor Castle had received five shots in her hull, three men killed, and six wounded; three of her main shrouds cut in two, and her mizen-mast badly wounded.

It was a quarter of an hour before the French-

man returned to the attack. Captain Oughton had again hauled his wind, as if not wishing to decline the combat; which, indeed, the superior sailing of his antagonist prevented. The corvette appeared to have given up manœuvring; whether from the crippled state of her spars and sails, or from perceiving that he had hitherto gained nothing by his attempts. He now ranged up to within two cables' lengths of the Windsor Castle, and recommenced the action, broadside to broadside.

The breeze was lulled by the concussion of the air; and both vessels continued in the same position and at the same distance, for upwards of an hour, pouring in their broadsides, every shot of which was effectual.

"Now, this is what I call a reg'lar set-to. Fire away, my lads," cried Captain Oughton, rubbing his hands. "A proper rally this. D—n it, but he 's game!"

The wounded mizen-mast of the Windsor Castle received another shot in the heart of it, which

threw it over the side. Every part of her hull proved the severe and well-directed fire of the enemy; her sails were as ragged as Jeremy Didler's pocket-handkerchief; her remaining masts pitted with shot; the bulwarks torn away in several places; the boats on the booms in shivers; rigging cut away, fore and aft, and the ends swinging to and fro with the motion of the vessel; her decks in confusion; and some of her guns, from necessity, deserted. Captain Oughton, Newton, and the rest of the officers, continued to encourage the men, giving them assistance in working the guns; and the ship's company appeared to have fully imbibed the bull-dog spirit of their commander.

The fire of the Windsor Castle had been equally destructive. The vessels had gradually neared each other in the calm; and the height of the Windsor Castle out of the water, in comparison with the corvette, had given her the advantage in sweeping the decks of the enemy. The contending vessels were in this situation when, for a

minute or two, a cessation of firing took place, in consequence of the accumulation of smoke, which had so completely enshrouded them both, that they knew not where to direct their guns ; and they waited until it should clear away, that the firing might recommence. A light air gradually swept the veil to leeward, and discovered both vessels to each other at the distance of about half a cable's length. Captain Oughton was with Newton on the poop, and the commander of the French corvette was standing on the hammock nettings of his own vessel. The latter took off his hat, and courteously saluted his adversary. Captain Oughton answered the salutation ; and then waving his hat, pointed to the English colours, which had been hoisted at the main ; as much as to say, “ they never shall come down ! ” The Frenchman (it was Surceuf) did the same to the tricolour, and the action recommenced.

“ Well done, my lads ! ” cried Captain Oughton ; “ well done ! that broadside was a stammerer—right into his ribs. Hurrah now, my hearts of oak ! ”

this fellow's worth fighting. Aim at his foremast—another broadside will floor it. It's on the reel—Newton, jump forward, and ——”

But the order was stopped by a grape-shot, which struck Captain Oughton on the breast. He staggered, and fell off from the poop to the quarter-deck. Newton leapt down, and went to him. The torrents of blood from his breast at once told the tale; and Newton called to some of the men, that his commander might be taken below.

“Wait a moment, my dear lad,” said Captain Oughton, faintly, and catching his breath at every word; “it's a finisher—can't come to time—I die game.” His head fell on his breast, and the blood poured out of his mouth.

Newton directed the body to be taken into the cuddy, that the men might not be dispirited by the sight. He then hastened to the poop, that he might reconnoitre the enemy. He perceived that the corvette had hauled on board his tattered courses, and was standing ahead of them.

"He's off, sir," cried one of the quarter-masters.

"I suspect not," replied Newton, who had his glass to his eye, looking upon the decks of the French vessel. "They are preparing to board, and will be round again in five minutes. Cutlasses and pikes ready—forward, my lads, all of us! We must beat them off!"

"And will too," cried the seamen, as, in obedience to their orders, they collected on the forecastle. But they mustered thin; nearly half of the ship's company were either lying dead or under the hands of the surgeon; and, as Newton surveyed his little force, fatigued as they were with their exertions, black with powder, stained with blood, and reeking with perspiration, he could not but acknowledge how heavy were the odds against the attack of a vessel so well manned as the corvette appeared to be. Newton said but a few words; but they were to the point; and he had the satisfaction to perceive, as they grasped their cutlasses, that if their numbers were few and

their frames exhausted, their spirit was as unsubdued as ever.

The corvette had in the mean time run ahead on a wind about a mile, when she wore round, and was now standing right on to the Windsor Castle, and had neared to within three cables' lengths. A few minutes was to decide the point. Her courses were again hauled up, and discovered her lee fore-rigging, bowsprit, cat-heads, and forecastle, crowded with men ready for the dash on board, as soon as the vessels should come in contact. Newton stood on one of the forecastle guns, surrounded by his men; not a word was spoken on board of the Windsor Castle, as they watched their advancing enemy. They were within a cable's length of each other, and Newton could plainly distinguish the features of the gallant Surceuf, who was in advance on the knight-heads, when a puff of wind, which at any other time would not have occasioned the starting of a royal sheet, took the sails of the corvette; and her wounded foremast, laden with men in the

lee rigging, unable to bear the pressure, fell over the side, carrying with it the main-top-mast and most of the crew who had been standing in the rigging, and leaving the corvette an encumbered wreck. A loud shout from the forecastle of the Windsor Castle announced that the English seamen were but too well aware of their desperate situation, and that they hailed the misfortune of the Frenchmen as their deliverance.

“Now, my lads, be smart,” cried Newton, as he sprung aft to the wheel, and put up the helm; “man the flying jib-halyards (the jib was under the fore-foot); let go the main-top bowling; square the main-yard. That will do, she’s paying off. Man your guns; half a dozen broadsides, and it’s all our own.”

The sun had disappeared below the horizon, and the shades of evening had set in, before this manœuvre had been accomplished. Several broadsides were pouréd into the corvette, which had the desired effect of crippling her still more, and her encumbered condition prevented any return.

At last, the night hid both vessels from each other, and the breeze freshening fast, it was necessary that the remaining masts of the Windsor Castle should be properly secured. The guns were therefore abandoned; and during the time the seamen were employed in knotting the rigging and bending the spare sails, Newton consulted with his brother officers, who were unanimous in agreeing that all had been done that could be expected, and that to wait till the ensuing day, when the coryette would have repaired her damages, would be attended with a risk of capture, which the valuable property entrusted to their charge would never authorise. It was not until past midnight that the Windsor Castle was in a condition to make sail; but long before this Newton had contrived to leave the deck for a few minutes to communicate with Isabel. With most of the particulars, and with the death of Captain Oughton, she had already been made acquainted; and if there could be any

reward to Newton for his gallantry and his prudence, more coveted than another, it was the affectionate greeting with which he was welcomed and congratulated by Isabel, her eyes beaming with tears of delight as they glanced from his face, and were shrouded on the deck.

Love and murder make a pretty mixture, although as antithetical as the sweet and acid in punch; a composition which meets the approbation of all sensible, discriminating people. But I shall leave the reader to imagine all he pleases, and finish the chapter by informing him that, when the sun again made his appearance, the corvette was not to be discovered from the mast-head. The guns were therefore properly secured; the decks washed; a jury mizen-mast stuck up abaft; Captain Oughton, and the gallant fellows who had fallen in the combat, committed to the deep with the usual ceremonies; the wounded made as comfortable as possible in their ham-

mocks ; the carpenters busied with the necessary repairs ; and the Windsor Castle, commanded by Newton Forster, running before a spanking breeze at the rate of eight knots per hour.

CHAPTER XI.

Ships are but boards, sailors but men ;
There be land rats, and water rats, water thieves,
And land thieves ; I mean pirates.

SHAKSPEARE.

Most prophetical was the remark made by Newton Forster to Isabel previous to the action ; to wit, that it would make or mar him. The death of Captain Oughton, and the spirited defence of the Windsor Castle, were the *making* of Newton Forster. As a subordinate officer, he might have been obliged to toil many years before he could have ascended to the summit of the ladder of promotion ; and during the time which he remained in that situation, what chance had he of making an independence, and proposing for the hand of

Isabel Revel? But now, that by a chain of circumstances peculiarly fortuitous, he was in command of an East Indiaman, returning home after having beat off a vessel of equal if not superior force, and preserved a cargo of immense value, he felt confident that he not only would be confirmed to his rank which he was now called upon to assume, but that he had every prospect of being employed. As a captain of an Indiaman, he was aware that reception into society, wealth, and consideration awaited him; and, what made his heart to swell with gratitude and exultation, was the feeling that soon he would be enabled to aspire to the hand of one to whom he had so long been ardently attached.

As the Windsor Castle plunged through the roaring and complaining seas, with all the impetus of weight in motion, Newton's eyes were radiant with hope, although his demeanour towards Isabel was, from the peculiar circumstances attending their situation, more delicately reserved than before.

When the Windsor Castle touched at St. Helena, Newton had the good fortune to obtain a supply of able seamen, more than sufficient for the re-manning of his ship. They had been sent there in an empty brig by a French privateer, who had captured many vessels, and had been embarrassed with the number of her prisoners. Having obtained the stores which were required, Newton lost no time in prosecuting his voyage to England.

It was about a fortnight after they had quitted St. Helena that a strange sail was reported on the starboard-bow; and, as they neared her, it was evident that her foremast was gone, and that she was otherwise in a disabled state. When the Indiaman was within a mile, the stranger threw out neutral colours, and hoisted a whiff, half-mast down, as a signal that she was in distress. Newton ordered the ship to be kept away, and when alongside of the vessel, lowered down a boat, and sent the third-mate to ascertain what assistance could be afforded. With sailors, thank God! dis-

trress is sufficient to obtain assistance, and the nation or country are at once merged in that feeling of sympathy for those misfortunes, which may perhaps but the next hour befall ourselves. The boat returned, and the officer informed Newton that the vessel was from the Island of Bourbon, bound to Hamburgh; that she had been dismasted and severely injured in a gale off the Cape of Good Hope; and that when her mast went over the side, one half of her crew, who were up at the time on the fore-yard, had been cast overboard and drowned: that from the want of men and material, they had been unable to rig an effective jury-mast, and had in consequence been so long on their passage, that their provisions and water were nearly expended. The officer concluded by stating, that there were a French lady and two gentlemen, with their attendants, who had taken their passage home in the vessel. Newton immediately went down the side, and pulled on board of the vessel to ascertain what assistance could be afforded. When

he arrived on board, he was met by the Flemish captain, who commenced a statement of his misfortunes and his difficulties, when the French lady, who, unobserved by Newton, had come up the companion-ladder, screamed out as she ran into his arms—

“ Ah ! mon Dieu !—c'est Monsieur Nu-tong !”

Newton looked at the lady, who had burst into tears as her face laid upon his shoulder, and immediately recognised his former kind and affectionate friend, Madame de Fontanges : close to him, with his hand extended, was her generous husband. The meeting was joyful, and Newton was delighted that circumstances had enabled him to render assistance to those who had been so kind to him in his former distress.

“ Oh ! Monsieur Nu-tong, nous avons tant soufferts ! Ah ! mon Dieu !—point de l'eau—rien à manger,” cried Madame de Fontanges ; then smiling through her tears, “ mais ce rencontre est charmant :—n'est ce pas mon ami ?” continued the lady, appealing to her husband.

" You do not remember Monsieur le Marquis ?" said M. de Fontanges to Newton. Newton turned his head, and recognised the governor of Guadaloupe, who had expressed such sympathy at his shipwreck, and had sent him away in the cartel instead of detaining him as a prisoner.

The vessel was indeed in a deplorable condition, and, had she not received the timely assistance now afforded, would in all probability have soon been a scene of horror and of suffering. They had not more than three days' water remaining on board, and provisions barely sufficing for ten days. Newton hastened to send back the boat with orders for an immediate and ample supply of these necessaries, in case of bad weather coming on, and preventing farther communication. Satisfied that their immediate wants were relieved, Newton took leave of his friends for the present, and returned on board of his own ship, despatching his carpenters and part of his crew to the immediate refit of the vessel, and then selecting a part of every thing that the Windsor Castle

contained in her store-rooms or on her decks, which he thought would administer to the comfort or the luxury of the passengers on board of the neutral.

In two hours, they, who were in a state bordering upon famine, found themselves revelling in plenty. Before night the English seamen had a jury-mast up, and the sails set. The Hollanders on board would have given their assistance, but they were told to remain on deck and make up for lost time, which they acquiesced in very readily, eating and drinking as if they were determined to lay in a stock for the remainder of the voyage. Newton, who had returned on board of the neutral to superintend the repairs and enjoy the society of his old friends, received from them a long account of what had occurred since their separation. At nightfall he took his leave, promising to continue under easy sail and remain with them for a day or two, until they were satisfied that all was right, and that they no longer required his assistance.

The narrative obtained by Newton may be thus condensed for the information of the reader. The Marquis de Fontanges had been appointed from the government of Guadaloupe to that of the Island of Bourbon, which was considered of more importance. Monsieur and Madame de Fontanges accompanied him to his new command; and they had remained there for two years, when the ruling powers, without any ground, except that the marquis had received his appointment from the former government, thought proper to supersede him. Frigates were not so plentiful as to spare one for the return of an ex-governor; and the marquis being permitted to find his way home how he could, had taken advantage of the sailing of the Hamburgher, to return to Europe or to France, or as he might find it advisable.

For two days, during which the weather was so fine that Madame de Fontanges and the gentlemen went on board of the Windsor Castle, and were introduced to the ladies, Newton

continued under easy sail, each day despatching to the neutral every thing which his gratitude could suggest; but, as Newton was most anxious to proceed on his voyage, it was agreed that the next morning they should part company. At the close of the evening a strange sail was observed on the weather-beam; but, as she carried no foretop-gallant-sail, and appeared to be steering the same course as the Windsor Castle, she excited but a momentary observation, supposing that she was some homeward-bound neutral, or a merchant vessel which had separated from her convoy. During the night, which was dark, the moon being in her first quarter, the officer of the middle-watch lost sight of their *protégée*; but this was to be expected, as she did not carry a light. Before morning the wind fell, and when the sun rose it was a perfect calm. The officer of the watch, as the day dawned, went on the poop, surveying the horizon for their companion, and discovered her six or seven miles astern, lying alongside of the strange vessel which they

had seen the day before. Both vessels, as well as the Windsor Castle, were becalmed. He immediately went down to Newton, acquainting him with the circumstance, which bore a very suspicious appearance. Newton hastened on deck; with his glass he could plainly distinguish that the stranger was a vessel of a low, raking description, evidently no merchant-man, but built for sailing fast, and in all probability a privateer. The man at the mast-head reported that boats were constantly passing between the two vessels. Newton, who felt very anxious for the safety of his friends, accepted the offer of the second-mate to take the gig and ascertain what was going on. In little more than an hour the gig was seen from the mast-head to arrive within half a mile of the vessels, and shortly afterwards the smoke from a gun, followed by a distant report. The gig then winded, and pulled back towards the Windsor Castle. It was in a state of great excitement that Newton waited for her return, when the second-mate informed him that on

his approach he discovered that she was a flush vessel, pierced for fourteen guns, painted black, and apparently well manned ; that she evidently, to use a nautical term, was “gutting” the neutral ; and that, as they had witnessed, on their boat coming within range, the vessel had fired a round of grape, which fortunately fell short of them. She had shown no colours ; and from her appearance and behaviour, (as all privateers respect neutrals,) he had no doubt that she was the pirate vessel, stated when they were at St. Helena to be cruising in these latitudes. Newton was of the same opinion ; and it was with a heavy heart that he returned to the cabin, to communicate the unpleasant intelligence to Mrs. Enderby and Isabel.

There is nothing more annoying in this world than the will without the power. At any time, a vessel becalmed is considered a very sufficing reason for swearing by those who are on board of her. What then must have been the feelings of Newton, lying on the water in a state of com-

elled inaction, while his friends were being plundered, and perhaps murdered by a gang of miscreants before his eyes! How eagerly and repeatedly did he scan the horizon for the coming breeze! How did Hope raise her head at the slightest cat's-paw that ruffled the surface of the glassy waters! Three successive gales of wind are bad enough; but three gales blowing hard enough to blow the devil's horns off are infinitely preferable to one idle, stagnant, motionless, confounded calm, oppressing you with the blue devils, and maddening you with the fidgets at one and the same time.

At last, as the sun descended, the breeze sprung up, first playing along the waters in capricious and tantalising airs, as if uncertain and indifferent in its infancy to which quarter of the compass it should direct its course. The ship again answered her helm; her head was put the right way, and the sails were trimmed to every shift which it made, to woo its utmost power. In a quarter of an hour it settled, blowing from a quarter which

placed them to windward of, and they carried it down with them to within two miles of the stranger and the neutral, who still remained becalmed. But, as the wind freshened, it passed ahead of them, sweeping along the surface, and darkening the colours of the water, until it reached the vessels to leeward; one of which, the one that Newton was so anxious to get alongside of, immediately took advantage of it, and, spreading all her canvass, soon increased her distance. When the Windsor Castle arrived abreast of the neutral, the stranger was more than two miles to leeward. A little delay was then necessary to ascertain what had occurred. Newton, who perceived M. de Fontanges on the deck, shouting to them, and wringing his hands, rounded to, lowered down a boat, and pulled on board of the neutral. The intelligence communicated was distressing. The strange vessel was a pirate, who had plundered them of every thing, had taken away Madame de Fontanges, Mimi, and Charlotte, her two female attendants. The captain

of the pirates had wounded, and severely beaten M. de Fontanges, who had resisted the “*enlèvement*” of his wife ; and, after having cut away all the standing rigging, and nearly chopped through the masts with axes, they had finished their work by boring holes in the counter of the vessel ; so that, had not Newton been able to come up with her, they must all have perished during the night.

There was no time to be lost ; the Marquis de Fontanges, M. de Fontanges, and the crew, were hurried on board of the Windsor Castle, (the pirate had taken care that they should not be delayed in packing up their baggage,) and Newton, as soon as he returned on board, and hoisted up his boat, crowded every stitch of canvass in pursuit of the pirate, who was now more than four miles distant. But, although the wind gradually increased, and was thus far in their favour, as they first benefited by it, yet, as the sun went down, so did their hopes descend. At night-fall the pirate had increased her dis-

tance to seven miles. Newton pursued, watching her with a night-glass until she could no longer be distinguished. Still, their anxiety was so great, that no one went to bed on board of the Windsor Castle. When the day broke, the pirate was not to be discovered in any quarter of the horizon from the mast-head of the Windsor Castle.

CHAPTER XII.

She stood a moment as a Pythoness
Stands on her tripod, agonised and full
Of inspiration gather'd from distress,
When all the heart-strings, like wild horses, pull
The heart asunder; then, as more or less
Their speed abated or their strength grew dull,
She sunk down on her seat by slow degrees,
And bow'd her throbbing head o'er trembling knees.

BYRON.

IT was with deep regret that Newton gave directions for the ship's head to be again directed on her course to England; but the property under his charge was of too great value to warrant risking it by cruising after the pirates, the superior sailing of whose vessel afforded no hopes of success. The melancholy situation of Madame de Fontanges threw a gloom over the party, which

was communicated even to the seamen; while the anguish of M. de Fontanges, expressed with all the theatrical violence characteristic of his nation, was a source of continual reminiscence and regret. They had been four days on their voyage, making little progress with the light and baffling winds, when they were shrouded in one of those thick fogs which prevail in the latitude of the Cape de Verds, and which was rendered more disagreeable by a mizzling rain.

On the sixth day, about twelve o'clock, the horizon cleared to the northward, and the fog in that quarter was rolled away by a strong breeze which rippled along the water. Newton, who was on deck, observed the direction of the wind to be precisely the reverse of the little breeze to which their sails had been trimmed; and the yards of the Windsor Castle were braced round to meet it. The gust was strong, and the ship, laden as she was, careened over to the sudden force of it, as the top-gallant sheets and halyards were let fly by the directions of the officer of the watch. The

fog, which had still continued thick to leeward, now began to clear away ; and, as the bank dispersed, the Marquis de Fontanges, who was standing on the poop by the side of Newton, cried out “*Voila un batiment!*” Newton looked in the direction pointed out, and discovered the hull of a vessel looming through the fog, about a quarter of a mile to leeward of the Windsor Castle. One minute’s scrutiny convinced him that it was the pirate, who, not having been expeditious in trimming his sails, *laid in irons*, as seamen term it, heeling over to the blast. The Windsor Castle was then running free at the rate of four miles an hour.

“Starboard the helm—all hands to board—steady so. Be smart, my lads—it’s the pirate—port a little. Hurrah! my lads—be quick, and she’s all our own. Quarter-master, my sword—quick!”

The crew, who were all on deck, snatched their cutlasses from the capstern-head, in which they were inserted, and before three minutes elapsed,

during which the pirate had not time to extricate himself from his difficulty, were all ready for the service. They were joined by the Flemish sailors belonging to the neutral vessel, who very deliberately put their hands in their breeches-pockets and pulled out their knives, about as long as a carpenter's two-foot rule, preferring this weapon to any thing else.

Monsieur de Fontanges, bursting with impatience, stood with Newton at the head of the men. When the collision of the two vessels took place, the Windsor Castle, conned so as not to run down the pirate, but to sheer alongside, stove in the bulwarks of the other, and carried away her topmasts, which, drawn to windward by the pressure on the back-stays, fell over towards the Windsor Castle, and entangling with her rigging, prevented the separation of the two vessels.

“No quarter, my friends!” cried Monsieur de Fontanges, who darted on board of the pirate vessel at the head of some men near the main-

rigging, while Newton and the remainder, equally active, poured down upon his quarter.

Such had been the rapidity of the junction, and such the impetuosity of the attack, that most of the pirates had not had time to arm themselves, which, considering the superiority of their numbers, rendered the contest more equal. A desperate struggle was the result; the attacked party neither expecting, demanding, nor receiving quarter. It was blow for blow, wound for wound, death to one or both. Every inch of the deck was disputed, and not an inch obtained until it reeked with blood. The voices of Newton and Monsieur de Fontanges, encouraging their men, were answered by another voice—that of the captain of the pirates, which had its due effect upon the other party, which rallied at its sound. Newton, even in the hurry and excitement of battle, could not help thinking to himself that he had heard that voice before. The English seamen gained but little ground, so obstinate was the resistance. The pirates fell; but, as they lay on the deck,

they either raised their exhausted arms to strike one last blow of vengeance before their life's blood had been poured out, or seized upon their antagonists with their teeth in their expiring agonies. But a party, who, from the sedateness of their carriage, had hitherto been almost neutral, now forced their way into the conflict. These were the Flemish seamen, with their long snicka-snee knives, which they used with as much imper-turbability as a butcher professionally employed. They had gained the main-rigging of the vessel, and, ascending it, had passed over by the cathar-pins, and descended with all the deliberation of bears on the other side, by which tranquil manœuvre the pirates were taken in the flank; and, huddled as they were together, the knives of the Flemings proved much more effective than the weapons opposed to them. The assistance of the Flemings was hailed with a shout from the English seamen, who rallied, and increased their efforts. Newton's sword had just been passed through the body of a tall,] powerful man, who had re-

mained uninjured in the front of the opposing party since the commencement of the action, when his fall discovered to Newton's view the captain of the vessel, whose voice had been so often heard, but who had hitherto been concealed from his sight by the athletic form which had just fallen by his hand. What was his astonishment and his indignation when he found himself confronted by one whom he had long imagined to have been summoned to answer for his crimes—his former inveterate enemy, Jackson!

Jackson appeared to be no less astonished at the recognition of Newton, whom he had supposed to have perished on the sand-bank. Both mechanically called each other by name, and both sprung forward. The blow of Newton's sword was warded off by the miscreant; but at the same moment that of Monsieur de Fontanges was passed through his body to the hilt. Newton had just time to witness the fall of Jackson, when a tomahawk descended on his

head ; his senses failed him, and he laid among the dead upon the deck.

There was a shriek, a piercing shriek heard when Newton fell. It passed the lips of one who had watched, with an anxiety too intense to be pourtrayed, the issue of the conflict;—it was from Isabel, who had quitted the cabin at the crash occasioned by the collision of the two vessels, and had remained upon the poop “spectatress of the fight.” There were no fire-arms used ; no time for preparation had been allowed. There had been no smoke to conceal—all had been fairly presented to her aching sight. Yes ! there she had remained, her eye fixed upon Newton Forster, as, at the head of his men, he slowly gained the deck of the contested vessel. Not one word did she utter ; but, with her lips wide apart from intensity of feeling, she watched his progress through the strife, her eye fixed—immoveably fixed upon the spot where his form was to be seen ; hope buoyant, as she saw his arm raised and his victims fall—heart sinking, as the

pirate sword aimed at a life so dear. There she stood like a statue—as white as beautiful—as motionless as if indeed she had been chiselled from the Parian marble; and, had it not been from her bosom heaving with the agony of tumultuous feeling, you might have imagined that all was as cold within. Newton fell—all her hopes were wrecked—she uttered one wild shriek, and felt no more.

After the fall of Jackson the pirates were disheartened, and their resistance became more feeble. M. de Fontanges carved his way to the taffrail, and then turned round to kill again. In a few minutes the most feeble-hearted escaped below, leaving the few remaining brave to be hacked to pieces, and the deck of the pirate vessel was in possession of the British crew. Not waiting to recover his breath, M. de Fontanges rushed below to seek his wife. The cabin-door was locked, but yielded to his efforts, and he found her in the arms of her attendants in a state of insensibility. A scream of horror at the sight of his

bloody sword, and another of joy at the recognition of their master, was followed up with the assurance that Madame had only fainted. M. de Fontanges took his wife in his arms, and carried her on deck, where, with the assistance of the seamen, he removed her on board of the Windsor Castle, and in a short time had the pleasure to witness her recovery. Their first endearments over, there was an awkward question to put to a wife. After responding to her caresses, M. de Fontanges inquired with an air of anxiety very remarkable in a Frenchman, how she had been treated. "Il n'y a pas de mal, mon ami," replied Madame de Fontanges. This was a jesuitical sort of answer, and M. de Fontanges required farther particulars. "Elle avoit temporisée" with the ruffian, with the faint hope of that assistance which had so opportunely and unexpectedly arrived. M. de Fontanges was satisfied with his wife's explanation; and, such being the case, what passed between Jackson and Madame de Fontanges can be no concern of the reader's. As for Mimi and

Charlotte, they made no such assertion ; but, when questioned, the poor girls burst into tears, and calling the captain and first-lieutenant of the pirate vessel barbarians, and every epithet they could think of, complained bitterly of the usage which they had received.

We left Newton floored (as Captain Oughton would have said) on the deck of the pirate vessel, and Isabel in a swoon on the poop of the Windsor Castle. They both were taken up, and then taken down, and recovered according to the usual custom in romances and real life. Isabel was the first to *come to*, because I presume a blow on the heart is not quite so serious as a blow on the head. Fortunately for Newton, the tomahawk had only glanced along the temple, not injuring the skull, although it stunned him, and detached a very decent portion of his scalp, which had to be replaced. A lancet brought him to his senses, and the surgeon pronounced his wound not to be dangerous, provided that he remained quiet.

At first Newton acquiesced with the medical

adviser, but an hour or two afterwards a circumstance occurred, which had such a resuscitating effect, that, weak as he was with the loss of blood, he would not resign the command of the ship, but gave his orders relative to the captured vessel, and the securing of the prisoners, as if nothing had occurred. What had contributed so much to the recovery of Newton *was* simply this, that *somehow or another* Mrs. Enderby left him for a few minutes *tête à tête* with Isabel Revel ; and during those few minutes, *somehow or another*, a very interesting scene occurred, which I have no time just now to describe. It ended, however, *somehow or another*, in the parties plighting their troth. As I said before, love and murder are very good friends ; and a chop from a tomahawk was but a prelude for the descent of Love, with “healing on his wings.”

The Windsor Castle lost five men killed and eleven wounded in this hard contest. Three of the Flemings were also wounded. The pirate had suffered more severely. Out of a crew of

seventy-five men, as no quarter had been given, there remained but twenty-six, who had escaped and secreted themselves below in the hold of the vessel. These were put in irons under the half-deck of the Windsor Castle, to be tried upon their arrival in England. As I may as well dispose of them at once, they were all sentenced to death by Sir William Scott, who made a very impressive speech upon the occasion; and most of them were hanged on the banks of the Thames. The polite valet of the Marquis de Fontanges hired a wherry, and escorted Mademoiselles Mimi and Charlotte to witness the "*barbares*" dangling in their chains; and the sooty young ladies returned much gratified with their interesting excursion.

It will be necessary to account for the re-appearance of Jackson. The reader may recollect that he made sail in the boat, leaving Newton on the island which they had gained after the brig had been run on shore and wrecked. When the boat came floating down with the tide, bottom up,

Newton made sure that Jackson had been upset and drowned; instead of which, he had been picked up by a Providence schooner; and the boat, having been allowed to go adrift with the main-sheet belayed to the pin, had been upset by a squall, and had floated down with the current to the sand-bank where Newton was standing in the water. Jackson did not return to England, but had entered on board of a Portuguese slave-vessel, and had continued some time employed in this notorious traffic, which tends so much to demoralise and harden the heart. After several voyages, he headed a mutiny, murdered the captain and those who were not a party to the scheme, and commenced a career of piracy, which had been very successful, from the superior sailing of the vessel, and the courage of the hardened villains he had collected under his command.

CHAPTER XIII.

Hopes of all passions, most befriend, us here ;
Joy has her tears, and Transport has her death :
Hope, like a cordial, innocent tho' strong,
Man's heart at once inspirits and serenes ;
Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys.
'Tis all our present state can safely bear :
Health to the frame and vigor to the mind,
And to the modest eye, chastised delight,
Like the fair summer evening, mild and sweet,
'Tis man's full cup—his paradise below.

YOUNG.

WITH what feelings of delight did Newton Forster walk the deck of the Windsor Castle, as she scudded before a fine breeze across the Bay of Biscay ! His happiness in anticipation was so great, that at times he trembled lest the cup should be dashed from his lips ; and at the same time that he thanked God for blessings received, he offered up his prayer that his pros-

pects might not be blighted by disappointment. How happy did he feel when he escorted Isabel on deck, and walked with her during the fine summer evenings, communicating those hopes and fears, recurring to the past, or anticipating the future, till midnight warned them of the rapidity with which time had flown away! The pirate vessel, which had been manned by the crew of the neutral and part of the ship's company of the Windsor Castle, under charge of the fourth-mate, sailed round and round them, until at last the Channel was entered, and, favoured with a westerly breeze, the Windsor Castle and her prize anchored in the Downs. Here Mrs. Enderby and Isabel quitted the ship, and Newton received orders to proceed round to the river. Before the Windsor Castle had anchored, the newspapers were put into his hands containing a report of the two actions, and he had the gratification of acknowledging that his countrymen were not niggardly in the encomiums upon his meritorious conduct.

Newton presented himself to the Court of

Directors, who confirmed his rank, and promised him the command of the first ship which was brought forward, with flattering commendations for his gallantry in protecting property of so much value. Newton took his leave of the august *Leaden-all* board, and hastened to his uncle's house. The door was opened by a servant who did not know him: Newton passed him, and ran up to the drawing-room, where he found Amber in company with William Avelyn, who was reading to her the dispatch containing the account of the action with *Surcœuf*.

Amber *sprung* into his arms. She had grown into a tall girl of nearly fifteen, budding into womanhood and beauty; promising perfection, although not yet attained to it. William Avelyn was also nearly half a foot taller; and a blush which suffused his handsome face at being surprised alone with Amber, intimated that the feelings of a man were superseding those of boyhood.

“Where is my mother?” inquired Newton.

“She is not at home, dear Newton,” replied

Amber; "she walked out with your father. They are both well."

"And my uncle?"

"Quite well, and most anxious to see you. He talks of nobody but you, and of nothing but your actions, which we were just reading about when you came in. Pray, *Captain* Newton, may I inquire after your French friends? What has become of them?"

"They are at Sablonniere's hotel, Miss Amber; they have obtained their parole at the Alien-office."

The conversation was interrupted by the return of Newton's father and mother, and shortly afterwards Mr. John Forster made his appearance. After the first greeting and congratulations were over—

"Well, Newton," observed Nicholas, "so you beat off a pirate, I hear."

"No, my dear father, we boarded one."

"Ah! very true; I recollect—and you killed Surcœuf."

"No, father, only beat him off."

"So it was; I recollect now.—Brother John, isn't it almost dinner-time?"

“ Yes, brother Nicholas, it is ; and I’m not sorry for it. Mr. William Avelyn, perhaps you ’d like to wash your hands ? A lad’s paws are never the worse for a little clean water.”

William Avelyn blushed ; his dignity was hurt : but he had lately been very intimate at Mr. Forster’s, and he therefore walked out to comply with the recommendation.

“ Well, brother Nicholas, what have you been doing all day ?”

“ Doing all day, brother ? really, I don’t exactly know. My dear,” said Nicholas, turning to his wife, “ what have I been doing all day ?”

“ To the best of my recollection,” replied Mrs. Forster, smiling, “ you have been asking when dinner would be ready.”

“ Uncle Nicholas,” said Amber, “ you promised to buy me a skein of blue silk.”

“ Did I, my dear ? Well, so I did, I declare. I’m very sorry—dear me, I forgot, I did buy it. I passed by a shop where the windows were full

of it, and it brought it to my mind, and I did buy it. It cost—what was it, it cost ?”

“ Oh ! I know what it cost,” replied Amber. I “gave you three-pence to pay for it. Where is it ?”

“ If I recollect, it cost seven shillings and six-pence,” replied Nicholas, pulling out, not a skein of blue silk, but a yard of blue sarsenet.

“ Now, papa, do look here ! Uncle Nicholas, I never will give you a commission again. Is it not provoking ? I have seven shillings and six-pence to pay for a yard of blue sarsenet, which I do not want. Uncle Nicholas, you really are very stupid.”

“ Well, my dear, I suppose I am. I heard William Avelyn say the same, when I came into the room this morning, because—let me see—”

“ You heard him say nothing, uncle,” interrupted Amber, colouring.

“ Yes, I recollect now—how stupid I was to come in when I was not wanted !”

“ Humph !” said John Forster ; and dinner was announced.

Since the recognition of Mrs. Forster by her husband, she had presided at her brother-in-law's table. The dinner provided was excellent, and was done ample justice to by all parties, especially Nicholas, whose appetite appeared to increase from idleness. Since Newton had left England he had remained a pensioner upon his brother; and, by dint of constant exertion on the part of Mrs. Forster, had been drilled out of his propensity of interfering with either the watch or the spectacles. This was all that was required by Mr. John Forster; and Nicholas walked up and down the house, like a tame cat, minding nobody, and nobody paying any attention to him.

After dinner the ladies retired, and shortly afterwards William Avelyn quitted the room.

Newton thought this to be a good opportunity to acquaint his uncle with his attachment to Miss Revel, and the favourable result. Mr. John Forster heard him without interruption.

“ Very nice girl, I dare say, nephew, but you are too young to marry. You can't marry and go to

sea. Follow your profession, Newton ; speculate in opium—I 'll find the means.”

“ I trust, sir, that I never should speculate in marrying ; but, had I acted on that plan, this would prove the best speculation of the two. Miss Revel has a very large fortune.”

“ So much the worse : a man should never be indebted to his wife for his money—they never forget it. I 'd rather you had fallen in love with a girl without a shilling.”

“ Well, sir, when I first fell in love she had not a sixpence.”

“ Humph !—well, nephew, that may be very true ; but, as I said before, follow your profession.”

“ Marriage will not prevent my so doing, uncle. Most captains of Indiamen are married men.”

“ More fools they ! leaving their wives at home, to be flattered and fooled by the Lord knows who. A wife, nephew, is—a woman.”

“ I hope that mine will be one, sir,” replied Newton, laughing.

“ Nephew, once for all, I don’t approve of your marrying now—that’s understood. It’s my wish that you follow your profession. I’ll be candid with you ; I have left you the heir to most of my fortune ; but—I can alter my will. If you marry this girl I shall do so.”

“ Alter your will, brother ?” said Nicholas, who had been attentive to the conversation. “ Why, who have you to leave your money to, except to Newton ?”

“ To hospitals—to pay off the national debt—to any thing. Perhaps I may leave it all to that little girl, who already has come in for a slice.”

“ But, brother,” replied Nicholas, “ will that be just, to leave all your money away from your family ?”

“ Just ! yes, brother Nicholas, quite just. A man’s will is his *will*. If he makes it so as to satisfy the wishes or expectations of others, it is no longer *his will*, but theirs. Nephew, as I said before, if you marry against my consent, I shall alter my will.”

“ I am sorry, sir, very sorry, that you should be displeased with me ; but I am affianced to this lady, and no worldly consideration will induce me not to fulfil an engagement upon which, indeed, my future happiness depends. I have no claim upon you, sir ; on the contrary, I have incurred a large debt of gratitude, from your kind protection. Any thing else you would require of me—”

“ Humph ! that’s always the case ; any thing else except what is requested. Brother Nicholas, do me the favour to go up stairs ; I wish to speak with my nephew alone.”

“ Well, brother John, certainly, if you wish it—if you and Newton have secrets ;” and Nicholas rose from his chair.

“ Surely, sir,” observed Newton, not pleased at the abrupt dismissal of his father, “ we can have no secrets to which my father may not be a party.”

“ Yes, but I have, nephew. Your father is my brother, and I take the liberty with my brother, if you like that better—not with your father.”

In the mean time Nicholas had stalked out of the room.

“ Nephew,” continued Mr. John Forster, as the door closed, “ I have stated to you my wish that you should not marry this young woman; and I will now explain my reasons. The girl left in my charge by my brother Edward has become the same to me as a daughter. I intend that you shall make three or four voyages as captain of an Indiaman; then you shall marry her, and become the heir to my whole fortune. Now you understand me. May I ask what are your objections?”

“ None, sir, but what I have already stated—my attachment and engagement to another person.”

“ Is that all?”

“ Is it not enough?”

“ It appears that this young woman has entered into an engagement on board ship, without consulting her friends.”

“ She has no father, sir. She is of age, and independent.”

“ You have done the same.”

“ I grant it, sir ; but even were I inclined, could I, in honour or honesty, retract ?”

“ Humph !”

“ Perhaps, sir, if you were acquainted with the young lady you might not be so averse to the match.”

“ Perhaps, if I saw with your eyes, I might not ; but that is not likely to be the case. Old men are a little blind and a little obstinate. After toiling through life to amass a fortune, they wish to have their own way of disposing of it. It is the only return they can receive for their labour. However, nephew, you will act as you please. As I said before, if you marry against my consent, I shall alter my will. Now, empty the bottle, and we 'll go up stairs.”

CHAPTER XIV.

And, Betty, give this check a little red.

POPE.

THE departure of Isabel in the Windsor Castle, so immediately after the death of Colonel Revel, prevented her communicating to her mother the alteration which had taken place in her circumstances, and her intended return to England. The first intimation received by Mrs. Revel was from a hurried note sent on shore by a pilot-boat off Falmouth, stating Isabel's arrival in the Channel, and her anticipation of soon embracing her mother. Isabel did not enter into any particulars, as she neither had time, nor did she feel

assured that the letter would ever reach its destination.

The letter did however come to hand two days before Isabel, and Mrs. Enderby arrived at the metropolis, much to the chagrin of Mrs. Revel, who imagined that her daughter had returned pennyless, to be a sharer of her limited income. She complained to Mr. Heaviside, who as usual stepped in, not so much from any regard for Mrs. Revel, but to while away the time of a *far niente* old bachelor.

“Only think, Mr. Heaviside,” said the lady, who was stretched on a sofa supported on pillows, “Isabel has returned from India. Here is a letter I have just received, signed by her maiden name! Her sisters so well married too! Surely she might have stayed out with one of them! I wonder how she got the money to pay her passage home! Dear me! what shall I do with her?”

“If I may be allowed to see the letter, Mrs. Revel,” said the old gentleman—

“ Oh, certainly, it’s nothing but a note.”

Mr. Heaviside read the contents.

“ There is very little in it indeed, Mrs. Revel; not a word about the colonel, or why she left India. Perhaps the colonel may be dead.”

“ Then she might have gone to live with one of her sisters, Mr. Heaviside.”

“ But perhaps he may have left her some property.”

“ And do you, a sensible man, think that if such was the case, my daughter would not have mentioned it in her note? Impossible, Mr. Heaviside!”

“ She may intend to surprise you, Mrs. Revel.”

“ She has surprised me,” replied the lady, falling back upon the pillows.

“ Well, Mrs. Revel, you will soon ascertain the facts. I wish you a good morning, and will pay my devoirs in a day or two to inquire after your health, and hear what has taken place.”

To defray the expenses attending the “ consignment” of the three Miss Revels to India,

Mrs. Revel had consented to borrow money, insuring her life as a security to the parties who provided it. Her unprincipled husband took this opportunity of obtaining a sum which amounted to more than half her marriage settlement, as Mrs. Revel signed the papers laid before her without examining their purport. When her dividends were become due this treachery was discovered, and Mrs. Revel found herself reduced to a very narrow income, and wholly deserted by her husband, who knew that he had no chance of obtaining farther means of carrying on his profligate career. His death in a duel, which we have before mentioned, took place a few months after the transaction, and Mrs. Revel was attacked with that painful disease, a cancer, so deeply seated as to be incurable. Still she was the same frivolous, heartless being; still she sighed for pleasure, and to move in those circles in which she had been received at the time of her marriage. But, as her income diminished, so did her acquaintances fall off, and at the period

of Isabel's return, with the exception of Mr. Heaviside, and one or two others, she was suffered to pine away in seclusion.

Isabel was greeted with querulous indifference until the explanation of the first ten minutes; then, as an heiress, with the means as well as the desire of contributing to her mother's comforts, all was joy and congratulation. Her incurable disease was for the time forgotten, and, although pain would occasionally draw down the muscles of her face, as soon as the pang was over, so was the remembrance of her precarious situation. Wan and wasted as a spectre, she indulged in anticipation of again mixing with the fashionable world, and talked of *chaperoning* Isabel to private parties and public amusements, when she was standing at the brink of eternity. Isabel sighed as she listened to her mother, and observed her attenuated frame; occasionally she would refer to her mother's state of health, and attempt to bring her to that serious state of mind which her awful situation demanded; but in vain: Mrs. Revel

would evade the subject. Before a week had passed she had set up an equipage, and called upon many of her quondam friends to announce the important intelligence of her daughter's wealth. Most of them had long before given orders not to be "at home to Mrs. Revel." The few to whom, from the remissness of their porters, she obtained admittance, were satisfied at the servants' negligence when they heard the intelligence which Mrs. Revel had to communicate. "They were so delighted; Isabel always was such a sweet girl; hoped that Mrs. Revel would not be such a recluse as she had been, and that they should prevail upon her to come to their parties!" An heiress is of no little consequence when there are so many younger brothers to provide for; and, before a short month had flown away, Mrs. Revel, to her delight, found that the cards and invitations of no inconsiderable portion of the *beau monde* covered the table of her confined drawing-room. To Isabel, who perceived that her mother was sinking every day under the exertion she went

through, all this was a source of deep regret. It occurred to her that to state her engagements with Newton Forster would have some effect in preventing this indirect suicide. She took an opportunity of confiding it to her mother, who listened to her with astonishment.

“Isabel! what do I hear? What! that young man who calls here so often? You, that can command a title, rank and fashion, engage yourself to a captain of an Indiaman! Recollect, Isabel, that, now your poor father is dead, I am your legal protector; and without my permission, I trust you have too much sense of filial duty to think of marrying. How you could venture to form an engagement without consulting me is quite astonishing! Depend upon it, I shall not give my consent; therefore, think no more about it.”

How often do we thus see people, who make no scruples of neglecting their duties, as eagerly assert their responsibility, when it suits their convenience.

Isabel might have retorted, but she did not. In few words, she gave her mother to understand that she was decided, and then retired to dress for a splendid ball, at which, more to please her mother than herself, she had consented to be present.

It was the first party of any consequence to which Mrs. Revel had been invited. She considered it her *re-entrée* into the fashionable world, and the presentation of her daughter; she would not have missed it for any consideration. That morning she had felt more pain than usual, and had been obliged to have recourse to restoratives; but once more to join the gay and fashionable throng—the very idea braced her nerves, rendered her callous to suffering, and indifferent to disease.

“I think,” said Mrs. Revel to her maid—“I think,” said she panting, “you may lace me a little closer, Martyn.”

“Indeed, madam, the holes nearly meet; it will hurt your side.”

“ No, no, I feel no pain this evening—there, that will do.”

The lady's maid finished her task, and left the room. Mrs. Revel rouged her wan cheeks, and, exhausted with fatigue and pain, tottered to an easy chair, that she might recover herself a little before she went down stairs.

In a quarter of an hour Isabel, who had waited for the services of Martyn, entered her mother's room, to announce that she was ready. Her mother, who was sitting in the chair, leaning backwards, answered her not. Isabel went up to her, and looked her in the face—she was *dead!*

CHAPTER XV.

My dearest wife was like this maid,
And such my daughter might have been.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE reader may be surprised at the positive and dictatorial language of Mr. John Forster, relative to Newton's marriage, as detailed in a former chapter; but, as Mr. John Forster truly observed, all the recompense which he had to expect for a life of exertion was to dispose of the fruits of his labour according to his own will. This he felt, and he considered it unreasonable that what he supposed a boyish attachment on the part of Newton was to overthrow all his preconcerted arrangements. Had Mr. Forster been able to

duly appreciate the feelings of his nephew, he probably would not have been so decided ; but Love had never been able to establish himself as an inmate of his breast. His life had been a life of toil. Love associates with idleness and ease. Mr. Forster was kind and cordial to his nephew as before, and the subject was not again renewed ; nevertheless, he had made up his mind, and, having stated that he would alter his will, such was his intention, provided that his nephew did not upon mature reflection accede to his wishes. Newton once more enjoyed the society of Isabel, to whom he imparted all that had occurred. "I do not wish to play the prude," answered Isabel, " by denying that I am distressed at your uncle's decision ; to say that I will never enter into his family without having received his consent, is saying more than my feelings will bear out ; but I must and will say, that I shall be most unwilling so to do. We must, therefore, as Madame de Fontanges did with the pirate captain, *temporise*, and I trust we shall be as successful." Newton, more rational

than most young men in love, agreed with Isabel on the propriety of the measure, and, satisfied with each other's attachment, they were by no means in a hurry to precipitate their marriage.

It may be recollected that Newton Forster felt convinced that the contents of the trunk which he picked up at sea, when mate of the coasting vessel, was the property of the Marquis de Fontanges. During their passage home in the Windsor Castle, he had renewed the subject to M. de Fontanges, and from the description which he gave from memory, the latter appeared to be of the same opinion. The conversation had not been revived until some time after their arrival in England, when Newton, anxious to restore the articles, desired M. de Fontanges to communicate with the marquis, and request that he would appoint a day upon which he would call at his uncle's and identify the property. The marquis, who had never been informed by M. de Fontanges that any supposed relics of his lost wife remained, sighed at the memory of his buried happiness—

buried in that vast grave, which defrauds the earth of its inherent rights—and consented to call upon the ensuing day. When the marquis arrived, accompanied by M. and Madame de Fontanges, he was received in the drawing-room by Mr. John Forster, who had brought from his chamber the packet in question, which had remained locked up in the iron safe ever since Newton had first committed it to his charge. After their introduction to each other, the marquis observed in English—

“ I am giving you a great deal of trouble ; unavailing indeed ; for, allowing that the articles should prove to be mine, the sight of them must be a source of renewed misery.”

“ Sir,” replied Mr. John Forster, “ the property does not belong to my nephew, and he has very properly reserved it until he could find out the legal owner. If the property is yours, we are bound to deliver it into your hands. There is an inventory attached to it,” continued the old lawyer, putting on his spectacles, and reading,

“ one diamond ring—but perhaps it would be better that I should open the packet.”

“ Will you permit me to look at the diamond ring, sir ?” observed M. de Fontanges. “ The sight of that will identify the whole.”

“ There it is, sir,” replied Mr. John Forster.

“ It is, indeed, that of my poor sister-in-law !” said M. de Fontanges, taking it up to the marquis. “ My brother, it is Louise’s ring !”

“ It is,” cried the marquis passionately, “ the ring that I placed in the centre of her *corbeille de mariage*. Alas ! where is the hand which graced it ?” and the marquis retreated to the sofa, and covered his face.

“ We have no occasion then to proceed farther,” observed Mr. John Forster, with emotion. “ The other articles you of course recognise ?”

“ I do,” replied Monsieur de Fontanges. “ My brother had taken his passage in the same vessel, but was countermanded. Before he had time to select all his own baggage, which was mixed with that of his wife, the ship was blown

out to sea, and proceeded on her voyage. These orders of merit were left with her jewels."

"I observe," said the old lawyer, "which I did not when Newton entrusted the packet to my charge, that the linen has not all the same marks; that of the adult is marked L. de M., while that which belonged to the child is marked J. de F. Was it the marquis's child?"

"It was; the linen of the mother was some belonging to her previous to her marriage. The maiden name was Louise de Montmorenci; that of the child has the initials of its name, Julie de Fontanges."

"Humph! I have my reasons for asking that question," replied the old lawyer. "Newton, do me the favour to step to my chambers and open the safe. You will find in it, on the right hand side, another small bundle of linen; bring it here. Stop, Newton, blow the dust out of the pipe of the key before you put it in, and be careful that it is well inserted before you turn it, or you may strain the wards. In all other points, you may

be as quick as you please. My Lord Marquis, will you allow me to offer you some refreshment? —a glass of wine will be of service. Brother Nicholas, do me the favour to call Amber."

Newton and Nicholas both departed on their respective missions. Amber made her appearance.

"Papa," said Amber, "do you want me?"

"Yes, my dear," said Mr. Forster, handing her the keys, "go down to the cellaret and bring up some wine. I do not wish the servants to come in just now."

Amber re-appeared with a small tray. She first handed it to the marquis, who roused at her voice.

"Papa requests that you will take some wine, sir. It will be of service to you."

The marquis, who had looked earnestly in her face when she had spoken, took the wine, and drinking it off, bowed as he replaced the glass. He then sunk back on the sofa.

When the rap at the door announced the return of Newton, Mr. John Forster requested M. de

Fontanges, in a low voice, to follow him, and, directing Newton, whom they met on the stairs, to return, they proceeded to the dining-parlour.

“I have requested you to come down, sir,” said Mr. John Forster, “that I might not, without being certain, raise hopes in your brother the marquis, which, if not realised, would create bitter feelings of disappointment; but I remarked the initials on the linen of the child; and if my memory, which is not very bad, fails me not, we shall find corresponding ones in the packet now before us;” and the old lawyer opened the bundle and displayed the contents, which proved to be marked as he had surmised.

“Most true,” replied Monsieur de Fontanges. “They are the same, and of course part of the property which was picked up.”

“Yes; but not picked up at the same time, or at the same spot, or by the same person. Those above stairs were, as you know, picked up by my nephew; these by a brother, who is

since dead; and in these clothes an infant was also washed upon the beach."

"His child!" exclaimed Monsieur de Fontanges.
"Where was it buried?"

"The child was restored to life, and is still living."

"If it is," replied Monsieur de Fontanges, "it can be no other than the young lady who just now called you father. The likeness to Madame la Marquise is most astonishing."

"It is as you suppose, sir," replied Mr. John Forster. "At my brother's death, he bequeathed the little girl to my protection; and I trust I have done justice to the deposit. Indeed, although an alien by blood, she is as dear to me as if she were my own daughter; and," continued the old lawyer, hesitating a little, "although I have the satisfaction of restoring her to her father's arms, it will be a heavy blow to part with her! When my brother spoke to me on the subject, I told him it was trouble and expense enough to bring up a child of one's own

begetting. I little thought at the time how much more I should be vexed at parting with one of another's. However, with the bundle she must be returned to the lawful owner. I have one more remark to make, sir. Do me the favour to look at that drawing of my poor brother's, which hangs over the sideboard. Do you recognise the portrait?"

"Triton!" cried Monsieur de Fontanges; "the dog which I gave my poor sister-in-law!"

"You are indebted to that dog for the life of your niece. He brought her on shore, and laid her at my brother's feet; but I have all the documents, which I will send for your perusal. The facts I consider so well established as to warrant a verdict in any court of justice; and now, sir, I must leave you to make the communication as soon, and, at the same time, as cautiously as you please. Newton, send Amber down to me."

We will pass over the scenes which followed in the dining-parlour and drawing-room. The Marquis de Fontanges discovered that he was

blessed with a daughter, at the same time that Amber learnt her own history. In a few minutes Amber was led up stairs to the arms of her father, whose tears of sorrow at the loss of his wife were now mingled with those of delight, as he clasped his daughter to his heart.

“What obligations do I owe to your whole family, my dear friend!” said the marquis to Newton.

“I will not deny it, sir,” replied Newton; “but allow me to observe, that for the recovery of your daughter you are equally indebted to the generosity of your own relatives and your own feeling disposition. Had not Monsieur and Madame de Fontanges protected and assisted me in my distress; had not you, instead of throwing me into prison, set me at liberty, you never would have known where your daughter was to be found. Had not one of my uncles hastened to the relief of the vessel in distress, and the other protected your little girl after his death, she would not have been now in existence. My gratitude for your kindness

induced me to remain by your ship, and subsequently to rescue you from the pirate, or you would not have now been a prisoner in this country—an evil which, under divine Providence, has been changed to a blessing, by restoring to you your daughter. We have all, I trust, done our duty, and this happy issue is our full reward."

"Humph!" observed the old lawyer.

CHAPTER XVI.

Thus far our chronicle—and now we pause,
Though not for want of matter, but 'tis time.

BYRON.

AMBER, or Julie de Fontanges, as we must now call her, quitted the abode of her kind protector, in such distress, that it was evident she regretted the discovery which had been made. She was too young to be aware of the advantages of high birth, and her removal was for some time a source of unfeigned regret. It appeared to her that nothing could compensate for the separation from her supposed father, who doated on her, from Mrs. Forster, who had watched over her, from Nicholas, who amused her, and from Newton, whom she loved as a brother. But the idea of going to a foreign

country, and never seeing them or William Avelyn again, and, though last, not least, to find that she was not an Englishwoman, and in future must not rejoice at their victories over her own nation, occasioned many a burst of tears when left alone to her own meditations. It was long before the devotion of her father, and the fascinating attentions of M. and Madame de Fontanges, could induce her to be resigned to her new condition. Mr. John Forster felt his bereavement more deeply than could have been supposed. For many days after the departure of Julie, he seldom spoke, never made his appearance, except at dinner-time, and as soon as the meal was finished hastened to his chambers, where he remained very late. Intense application was the remedy which he had selected to dispel his care, and fill up the vacuum created by the absence of his darling child.

“Newton,” said he, one evening, as they discussed a bottle of port, “have you considered what I proposed? I confess to you that I am more than ever anxious for the match; I cannot

part with that dear child, and you can bring her back to me."

" I have reflected, sir; but the case must be viewed in a very different light. You might affiance your adopted daughter at her early age, but the Marquis de Fontanges may not be so inclined; nay, farther, sir, it is not impossible that he may dislike the proposed match. He is of a very noble family."

" I have thought on that subject," replied Mr. John Forster; " but our family is as well descended, and quite well enough for any Frenchman, let him be a marquis, or even a duke. Is that the only obstacle you intend to raise—or, if this is removed, will you again plead your attachment to another?"

" It is the only one which I mean to raise at present, sir. I acknowledge Julie de Fontanges to be a sweet girl, and, as a relation, I have long been much attached to her."

" Humph!" replied the old lawyer, " I always thought you a sensible lad—we shall see."

Now, be it observed, that there was a certain degree of the jesuitical on the part of our friend Newton on this occasion, excusable only from his wish that the mortification of his uncle at the disappointment of his hopes should not be occasioned by any farther resistance on his part.

To M. de Fontanges, who was aware of Newton's attachment to Isabel, he had, previous to the discovery which had taken place, communicated the obstacle to his union, raised by the pertinacity of his uncle. After the removal of Julie, M. de Fontanges acquainted his brother with the wishes of Mr. John Forster, and explained to him how much they were at variance with those of Newton.

The first time that Newton called upon the marquis, the latter, shaking him warmly by the hand, said—"I have been informed, my dear Newton, by my brother, of the awkward predicament in which you are placed by the wish of your uncle that you should marry my Julie when she grows up. Believe me, when I say it, there is no

man to whom I would sooner confide the happiness of my daughter, and that no consideration would induce me to refuse you, if you really sought her hand ; but I know your wishes, and your attachment to Miss Revel, therefore be quite easy on the subject. Your uncle made his proposition when Julie had no father to be consulted ; the case is now different, and, for your sake, I intend, for a time, to injure myself in the opinion of your good relation. I shall assume, I trust, what, if ever I had it, would be immediately sacrificed to gratitude—I mean high aristocratical pride ; and should your uncle make the proposal, refuse it upon the grounds that you are not noble by *descent*. No one will deny your nobility on any other point. Do you understand me, Newton ? and will my so doing be conformable to your wishes ?”

“ It will, Monsieur le Marquis, and I thank you most sincerely.”

“ Then make no objection when he proposes the match a second time ; leave all the oblo-

quy on my shoulders," said the marquis, smiling.

This arrangement having been made, it was not surprising that Newton heard his uncle's renewal of the proposition with such calmness and apparent acquiescence.

"We dine with the marquis to-morrow, Newton," observed Mr. John Forster; "I shall take an opportunity after dinner of requesting a few minutes' interview, when I shall put the question to him."

"Certainly, sir, if you think right," replied Newton.

"Well, I'm glad the dear girl has changed that foolish name of Amber. What could possess my brother! Julie is very fine, nevertheless; but then she was christened by French people."

The next day the parties met at dinner. Isabel Revel had been asked; and, having heard from Madame de Fontanges of the plan agreed upon, and anxious to see the old lawyer, she had consented to join the party. The dinner passed off

as most dinners do when the viands and wines are good, and every body is inclined to be happy. Isabel was placed next to Mr. Forster, who, without knowing who she was, felt much pleased with the deference and attention of so beautiful a young woman.

“Newton,” said his uncle, when the ladies retired, and the gentlemen packed up their chairs, “who was that young lady who sat next to me?”

“The young lady, my dear uncle, whom I did wish to introduce to you as my intended wife—Miss Isabel Revel.”

“Humph!—why, you never spoke to her before dinner, or paid her any common civility!”

“You forget, sir, your injunctions, and—”

“That’s no reason, nephew, why you should forget common civility. I requested that you would not marry the young lady; but I never desired you to commit an act of rudeness. She is a very nice young person; and politeness is but

a trifle, although marriage is a very serious thing."

In pursuance of his plans, when the gentlemen rose, Mr. John Forster requested a few minutes' conversation with the marquis, who, bowing politely, showed the way to a small study on the same floor.

Mr. Forster immediately stated his wish that an engagement should be formed between his nephew and Julie de Fontanges.

"Mr. Forster," replied the marquis, drawing up proudly, "the obligations I am under to your family are so great, that there are but few points in which I could refuse you; and I therefore am quite distressed that, of this proposal, I am obliged to decline the honour. You may be ignorant, Mr. Forster, that the family of the De Fontanges is one of the oldest in France; and, with every respect for you and your nephew, and all gratitude for your kindness, I cannot permit my daughter to form a *mésalliance*."

"A *mésalliance*!—humph! I presume, sir,

in plain English, it means marrying beneath her rank in life?"

The marquis bowed.

"I beg to observe, sir," said Mr. John Forster, "that our family is a very old one. I can show you our pedigree. It has lain for some years by the side of your daughter's bundle in the iron safe."

"I have no doubt of the excellence of your family, Mr. Forster. I can only express my deep regret that it is not *noble*. Excuse me, Mr. Forster; except you can prove that—"

"Why, I could prove it by purchasing a dozen marquises, if I thought proper!"

"Granted; Mr. Forster. In our country they are to be purchased; but we make a great difference between the *parvenus* of the present day and the *ancienne noblesse*."

"Well, Mr. Marquis, just as you please; but I consider myself quite as good as a French marquis," replied Mr. Forster, in a tone of irritation.

“ Better than many, I have no doubt; but still, we draw the line. Noble blood, Mr. Forster.”

“ Noble fiddlestick ! Monsieur le Marquis, in this country, and the inhabitants are not fools, we allow money to weigh against rank. It purchases that as it does every thing else, except heaven. Now, Monsieur le Marquis—”

“ Excuse me, sir ; no money will purchase the hand of Julie de Fontanges,” replied the marquis.

“ Well, then, Monsieur le Marquis, I should think that the obligations you are under in restoring your daughter to your arms—”

“ Warrants your asking for her back again, Mr. Forster ?” replied the marquis, haughtily ; “ a labourer might find this diamond *solitaire* that’s now upon my finger. Does it therefore follow that I am to make him a present of it ?”

“ Humph !” ejaculated Mr. Forster, much affronted with the comparison.

“ In short, my dear sir, any thing which you or your family can think of, which it is in our power to grant, will make us most happy ; but to sully the blood of the most ancient—”

John Forster would hear no more ; he quitted the room and walked up stairs before the marquis had completed his speech. When he entered the drawing-room, his countenance plainly expressed his disappointment. Like all men who have toiled for riches, he had formed plans in which he considered his wealth was to command success, and had overlooked every obstacle which might present itself against the completion of his wishes.

“ Newton,” said he, as they stood apart near the window, “ you have been a good lad in not persisting to thwart my views, but that French marquis, with his folly and his ‘ancienne noblesse,’ has overthrown all my plans. Now, I shall not interfere with yours. Introduce me to Miss what’s her name ; she is a very fine girl, and from what I saw of her during dinner, I like her very much.”

Isabel exerted herself to please, and succeeded. Satisfied with his nephew’s choice, flattered by his previous apparent submission, and disgusted with the marquis, Mr. John Forster thought no more of Mademoiselle de Fontanges. His consent was

voluntary, and in a short time Isabel Revel changed her name.

It was about five months after Newton's marriage that he received a letter from the Board, appointing him to the command of a ship. Newton handed the letter over to Mr. Forster.

"I presume, sir, it is your wish that I should accept the offer?"

"What offer?" said the old lawyer, who was reading through a case for counsel's opinion. "Melville—for Madras and China.—Why, Newton, I really do not see any occasion for your going afloat again. There is an old proverb—'The pitcher that goes often to the well is broken at last.' You're not tired of your wife already?"

"I hope not, sir; but I thought it might be your wish."

"It's my wish that you should stay at home. A poor man may go to sea, because he stands a chance to come home rich; but a man who has money in hand and in prospect, if he goes to sea, he is a fool. Follow your profession as long as you require it, but no longer."

“ Why then do you work so hard, my dear sir,” said Isabel, leaning over the old gentleman, and kissing him, in gratitude for his decision. “ Surely you can afford to relax a little now?”

“ Why do I work so hard, Isabel?” replied Mr. Forster, looking up at her through his spectacles. “ Why, you expect to have a family, do you not?”

Isabel blushed; the expectation was undeniable.

“ Well, then, I presume the children will have no objection to find a few thousands more to be divided among them by-and-by—will they, daughter?”

The conversation was interrupted by the entry of a servant with a letter; Mr. Forster broke the seal, and looked at the signature.

“ Humph! from the proud old marquis. ‘ Very sorry, for a short period, to have fallen in your good opinion—should have rejoiced to have called Newton my son-in-law!’—Humph! ‘ Family pride all assumed—Newton’s happiness at stake—trust the deceit will be pardoned, and a renewal of

former intimacy.' Why, Newton, is all this true?"

"Ask Isabel, sir," replied Newton, smiling.

"Well, then, Isabel, is all this true?"

"Ask Newton, sir," replied Isabel, kissing him.

"The fact is, my dear sir, I could not afford to part with Newton, even to please you, so we made up a little plot."

"Humph!—made up a little plot—well—I shan't alter my will, nevertheless;" and Mr. Forster recommenced the reading of his brief.

Such is the history of Newton Forster, which, like most novels or plays, has been wound up with marriage. The last time that I appeared before my readers, they were dissatisfied with the termination of my story; they considered I had deprived them of "a happy marriage," to which, as an undoubted right, they were entitled, after wading through thrée tedious volumes. As I am anxious to keep on good terms with the public, I hasten to repair the injury which it has sustained, by stating that about three years after the marriage of Newton Forster, the fol-

lowing paragraph appeared in the several papers of the metropolis.

“ Yesterday, by special license, the Right Honourable William Lord Avelyn to Mademoiselle Julie de Fontanges, only daughter of the Marquis de Fontanges, late governor of the Island of Bourbon. The marriage was to have been solemnised in December last, but was postponed, in consequence of the death of the late Lord Avelyn. After the ceremony, the happy couple,” &c. &c. &c.

* * * * *

And now, most arbitrary public, I consider that I have made the *amende honorable*, and that we are quits; for, if you were minus a happy marriage in the last work, you have a couple to indemnify you in the present.

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